

FRANT PARISH COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FRANT PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT BELLS YEW GREEN VILLAGE HALL, BELLS YEW GREEN ON WEDNESDAY 19TH JULY 2017 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Rutherford (Chair)
Cllrs Mrs Kinley, Mrs Best, Wright, Rowland, MacDonald-Brown

R.Karim Clerk
County Councillor Bob Standley
Ms. K. Graham – East Sussex Fire and Rescue
Mr. A. Whittle – Friends of Bells Yew Green
Mr. Z. Turner
Mrs. J. Steadman

1. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Howell and Cllr Stevens.

2. To receive declarations of interest on items on the agenda

None.

3. To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 14th June 2017 as a true record

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

(Cllr Best arrived at the meeting)

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

4.1 The Clerk spoke with Ms Myers about the see saw in Frant green but she could not recall who the company was who had originally installed it. However, the Clerk had done some further research and established that Sutcliffe Play, as the agent for Kaiser-Kuhne, were likely to have installed it (2009). Completed.

4.2 Cllr Rutherford to email councillors with suggestions for possible roles for them during the forthcoming year. Carried forward. **Action: WR**

4.3 The Clerk responded to Highways, agreeing to their proposal of a safety sign near Nobles Wood, BYG. Completed.

4.4 The Clerk added Cllr Whetstone to the circulation list for agendas and minutes. Completed.

4.5 The Clerk said she been liaising with Ms Steadman about the Open Gardens funds. Completed.

4.6 The Clerk wrote to NatWest about the two outdated cheques still being recorded in the accounts. Completed.

4.7 The Clerk confirmed that she had posted details of the two councillor vacancies in noticeboards and on the website and some response been received. Completed.

4.8 The Clerk responded to Wealden DC about their On-Road Parking Enforcement Report. Completed.

4.9 Cllr MacDonald-Brown measured the perimeter of the green in BYG for parking posts and this had formed the basis for the quote, to be discussed later in the meeting. Completed.

4.10 Cllr Wright noted that the vehicles parked near East Lodge during its renovation were still parked near the green in Frant. However, he said they were not actually parking *on* the green and were therefore not causing any damage. It was noted that once the renovation works were complete to the house, these vehicles would no longer be needed. Completed.

4.11 The Clerk spoke with Frant Primary School about suggestions for preventing dog fouling on Church Lane. The School had responded that they were in favour of a dog bin on Church Lane and would write to the Council about this. It was agreed to review this once received. Completed.

4.12 The Clerk wrote to Ely Grange about ownership of the verge along the road between Frant and BYG. No response as yet. Carried forward.

4.13 The Clerk wrote to Frant Primary School, agreeing to their use of the field to begin their preparations for Bonfire Night. Completed.

5. Public forum

Mr Whittle, representing the Bells Yew Green Society, raised various issues. Firstly, he noted that the Society had been re-named the Friends of Bells Yew Green and that it now had a Secretary and several new members. He said they were intending to host a Christmas fair and erect a Christmas tree and also hold a fair in the summer. These ideas were welcomed by the Council. Secondly, Mr Whittle noted that a petition had been run to assess support for changing the name of Frant Station to Bells Yew Green for Frant. Over one hundred signatures were received. Mr Whittle said there were several arguments in favour of this change, not least the issue that people arriving at the station found themselves to actually be some twenty minutes away from Frant (on foot) along a dangerous stretch of road. Mr Whittle noted there was no cost to changing the name and there was precedent for this, with Southborough station having been changed to High Brooms.

Cllr Rutherford expressed concern that the idea had not been widely published enough and that residents in Frant and Eridge had not been consulted or, indeed, likely knew of the petition. He noted that he was aware of strong views in the Parish about this issue, some in favour and some against. He also noted that the councillors were not representative enough of the Parish to either lend support categorically to the idea, or oppose it. Cllr Kinley expressed the same view. Cllr Rutherford pointed out that this issue was intended to form part of the questionnaire in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan.

It was agreed that Mr Whittle would email the petition and wording to the Clerk for advertisement on the website, noticeboards, Parish News and in local shops and pubs. **Action: AW/Clerk**

Mr Turner spoke next, referring to his family's two allotments in Frant. He explained that one allotment produced vegetables while the other was intended to be an area for the family to relax in. He said that they had dug a pond on the second allotment. He said it is fenced-off, is about a metre deep in the middle and is roughly 5ft by 10ft and that the soil was still on site. A standpipe would be used to fill it and the Turner family intended to reimburse the Allotment Association for any water used.

The Councillors said they did not, as landlords, have a strong objection to the pond per se, but it was more a matter of how this would be covered, if at all, under the Council's insurance policy. It was agreed that the Clerk would investigate this and liaise with the Allotment Association. **Action: Clerk**

(Mr Turner left the meeting).

Last to speak during the public forum was Ms Graham. She updated the Council about the Speed Watch initiative and said that because of new partnership arrangements, such initiatives no longer needed to go through a chain of hierarchy for approval. Ms Graham said that her colleague had therefore already agreed to Frant being part of Speed Watch and that three points on Frant green had been identified from which it would be safe to operate. She noted that her colleague could train volunteers and get them qualified for insurance purposes. She also said that, in principle, there was funding available for the Council to acquire its own speed detection device. Cllr Rutherford said the Council had been trying for a long time to get Speed Watch organised but that there had been issues around training, the recent lack of a PCSO presence in Frant and so on.

Ms Graham said that Wealden Fire and Rescue Service has a team of volunteers for monitoring traffic. She said that a senior police officer had confirmed that volunteers could operate near a VAS. Ms Graham said she was keen to organise volunteers to monitor traffic in Frant along the A267.

Mr Whittle asked Ms Graham if the Friends of Bells Yew Green could put sites forward for monitoring (eg. at Nobles Wood in BYG). It was agreed that Ms Graham and/or her colleague would forward details to the Clerk for dissemination.

Cllr Rutherford thanked Ms Graham for attending the meeting and providing the Council with good advice about how to get Speed Watch up and running.

6. To receive reports of County and District Councillors

County

County Councillor Standley made the following comments:

- In light of the recent tragedy at Grenfell Tower in London, ESCC was carrying out inspections of all the high-rise buildings across the County, although he noted there were none in Wealden District. He said the County wanted councillors to be more visible, if any similar events were to unfortunately occur in the future.
- The County has broken even in financial terms, in part because of the Better Care Fund and a change in the rules in relation to loans.
- Cabinet has approved the pulling together of various organisations into one body, called East Sussex Best Together, bringing together health and social care efforts.
- The footpath works on the A267 into Frant have now been completed. Cllr Standley noted his concerns that these works, on a major route, had taken eight weeks to complete.
- Park View cottages have been flooded again in recent weeks. Cllr Standley to continue to look into this.

Action: BS

- Cllr Rutherford noted that there was also flooding near Holly Cottages, near the turning to Wadhurst off the A267. Cllr Standley agreed to also look into this.

Action: BS

District

Cllr Rutherford made the following comments:

- A total of seven 3-storey buildings in Wealden District had all been checked for fire safety measures and were up to date.
- Two fly-tippers had been successfully prosecuted and sentenced. Anyone who witnesses fly-tipping should not intervene but instead call WDC's Streetscene Enforcement team with the details.

(Ms Graham left the meeting).

7. Green Spaces (DW)

7.1 To consider the quote for cultivating the margins of Frant green as wild spaces

Ms Steadman gave the Council an update following the very successful Open Gardens event, which raised approximately £2,400. She said the Frant Open Spaces Group had been set up with a Treasurer, several members and its own bank account. Ms Steadman said the ambition of the Group was to professionalise what happens next and to that end, the Group was liaising with the High Weald AONB Unit. The Unit will, for example, give the Group professional advice and take soil samples and analyse them to ensure the best outcome.

Ms Steadman noted that the native species should start to show straight away; a local volunteer effort will take heather cuttings and try to bring these on. This would be married up with the professional effort of planting-up the margins of the green.

Ms Steadman listed the items she would like the Council to agree to:

- that it will employ a suitable contractor to undertake to cut and remove cuttings in a method suitable for wild flower meadow development on the edges of the green in September this year;
- to allow for a small increase in wild space on the top border of the green to increase the depth of the margins
- to leave three weeks between cuts; currently, where the wild spaces are on steep banks, the uncut area be allowed to extend on to the flat top of the green for between half a metre and a metre;
- to check with the Council insurers about whether or not a type of poison can be applied to cut bramble stalks.

7.2 To consider the quote from Orchard Landscapes for various additional works

Cllr Rutherford said that the Council would be re-tendering for the maintenance of the green. The Clerk tabled the recent quote from the Council's current contractor for doing the one-off cut of the margins of the green in late September. This amounted to £945 plus VAT. The councillors felt this figure was high and it was agreed the Clerk would revert to the contractor again to seek a reduction. Ms Steadman noted that Frant Open Spaces Group would likely give the chosen contractor additional work. **Action: Clerk**

The Clerk tabled the contractor's quotes for maintaining the two churchyards in the Parish. It was noted that the two quotes amounted to about ten per cent of the Council's annual precept. It was agreed that these quotes were expensive and that two additional quotes from other contractors should be sought. **Action: Clerk**

It was agreed that the third quote, for spraying for weeds along footpaths, would be considered during the re-tendering process.

7.3 To consider recommendations of RoSPA reports

The Clerk referred to her summary of the two RoSPA reports for the play areas in Frant and BYG, circulated via email prior to the meeting. She noted that the frame with two swings and a basket swing in the Frant play area had been categorised as 'high risk' meaning 'urgent action required'. It was agreed, therefore, that the Clerk would contact Mr McGregor-Gould to remove the swings and erect a notice asking people not to climb on the frame, as a matter of urgency. **Action: Clerk**

[Post-meeting note: both these actions were carried out on 20th July 2017].

It was also agreed to ask Mr McGregor-Gould to quote for the more minor repairs in both RoSPA reports. The Clerk referred to a quote for a new see-saw amounting to £5900. This was considered expensive and it was agreed that the Clerk should contact Mrs Bladon, who had overseen the development of the play area in BYG, for advice. **Action: Clerk**

(Ms Steadman and Mr Whittle left the meeting).

7.4 To consider the installation of cricket nets

Cllr Rutherford said that Mr and Mrs Butler wanted cricket nets to be erected to the front of their house when matches were being played. There was some discussion over whose responsibility this was. The councillors considered it was technically Mr and Mrs Butler's responsibility but that the Council could, in this instance, contribute as a gesture of support. Cllr Best did not agree with this position. It was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with Frant Cricket Club about how much the netting would cost. **Action: Clerk**

7.5 To consider the quote for repairing the sign in Eridge

The quote for repairing the village sign in Eridge was approved subject to the measurements being checked and the new wood being left to weather naturally, rather than be stained a 'pine' colour. **Action: Clerk**

7.6 To consider the quote for installing wooden parking posts around the green at BYG

It was agreed that the quote for the above was expensive and that more quotes should be sought. Cllr MacDonald-Brown noted that the quote did not detail how the wooden posts would be fixed and that the spaces between each post could be increased, resulting in fewer posts being needed. **Action: Clerk**

7.7 To review the re-installation of the circular bench in Frant green

The Clerk explained that the bench had been made but, after some hours of trying, Mr MacGregor-Gould and his colleague had been unable to make it fit again under the same tree, owing to the growth in the tree’s roots. They had spent time trying to find an alternative location for it, but had not found anywhere suitable. It was agreed that

The councillors understood the problem and it was agreed that alternative sites would be considered. It was noted that if another location could not be found, the bench could be advertised and perhaps sold for private use. Clerk to establish what the dimensions of the bench are. **Action: Clerk**

7.8 To consider the formation of a green in Eridge

The idea of forming a small green in Eridge was discussed. It was agreed that Cllr Rutherford would write to the landowner via their agent, Strutt and Parker. Cllr Best said she would forward the contact details and photographs to Cllr Rutherford. **Action: WR/GB**

8. Finance (WR)

8.1 To review the budget against spend, year to date

The Clerk tabled the progress of the budget to date. The spend against budget was considered and noted.

8.2 To approve the accounts payable

The accounts were approved.

8.3 To approve the bank reconciliations for June and July 2017

Both bank reconciliations were approved.

9. Safety in the Parish (MR)

Cllr Kinley remarked that an abandoned motorbike had been in situ in the forest opposite her property for some time. She understood it was now being investigated.

10. Highways and Lighting (SH)

10.1 To consider the quote for re-siting the street lamp at Warren Farm Lane

The Clerk said that ESCC had supplied a quote for re-siting the street lamp and control box but was still awaiting a quote from UKPN for associated works. The ESCC quote was noted and it was agreed to refer this item to the next agenda, if the UKPN quote was available then.

While discussing the visibility issues in relation to the above location, it was agreed to raise the cutting back of vegetation at other junctions with Cllr Standley, as some were quite overgrown, causing a potential hazard for drivers.

Cllr Rutherford said he had cut back the brambles around the VAS on the A267 in Frant. He said this vegetation was probably within the Council’s ownership and that a quote should be sought for keeping the brambles in check to ensure the VAS was always fully operational. **Action: Clerk**

11. Communications (CK)

11.1 To discuss re-siting the noticeboard in BYG to outside Lambs Larder

It was agreed that this could be moved to the side wall by Lambs Larder in BYG. Clerk to contact Mr MacGregor-Gould for a quote. **Action: Clerk**

12. Planning (GB)

12.1 To consider and comment on planning applications:

- **WD/2017/1295/F – Shernfold Meadows, Wadhurst Road, Frant, TN3 9EH**
Erection of a replacement garage
The councillors raised no objection to this application.
- **WD/2017/1398/F – 1 New Cottages, Mayfield Road, Frant, TN3 9HS**
New garage
The councillors raised no objection to this application. However, the neighbour's concern about the recent loss of hedging was noted and the councillors said they shared these concerns that no further exposure of the site should occur.
- **WD/2017/7508/T – St Marks, Town Court Farm, Frant Road, Frant, TN2 5LS**
Proposed telecommunications installation upgrade and associated works
The Council raised no objections these proposals.

12.2 To note planning applications that have been determined by WDC

- **WD/2017/0845/LB & 0844/F – Yew Trees, Hawkenbury Road, Frant, TN3 9AP**
Extension to rear of property and internal alterations
Approved: 15th June
Noted.
- **WD/2017/0866/LBR – Flat 4, Shernfold Park, Frant, TN3 9DL**
Various internal alterations
Approved: 3rd July
Noted.
- **WD/2017/0639/F – 26 Warren Ridge, Frant, TN3 9EE**
Single-storey rear extension
Approved: 10th July
Noted.

13. Chairman's announcements & correspondence for noting

Cllr Rutherford read out an email from Wealdlink which asked the Council to rekindle its contribution so that Frant Primary School could use the service for its weekly swimming lessons in Crowborough. It was agreed that this was an important consideration and that the Clerk would contact the school to ask what their arrangements were and any costs. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr Rutherford referred to recent correspondence about the scheme to adopt BT phone boxes. It was noted that the phone boxes in Frant and BYG were proposed by WDC to be put forward for listing. Clerk to inform the Friends of Bells Yew Green. **Action: Clerk**

14. Correspondence

Nil.

15. Urgent issues at the discretion of the Chairman for noting or inclusion on future agenda

Cllr Rutherford noted that the Clerk would be on annual leave for the weeks beginning 24th July and 31st July, but would attend the Planning Meeting on 31st July. He also noted that the Clerk would be taking an additional week from 28th August.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10pm.

Action Points

Mr. Whittle to email the Clerk with details of the petition (re: Frant Station) for advertising.	AW/Clerk
Cllr Rutherford to email councillors with suggestions for possible roles for them during the forthcoming year.	WR
Clerk to liaise with Allotment Association and Council insurers about new pond.	WR
Cllr Standley to investigate recent flooding at Park View cottages in Frant.	BS
Cllr Standley to investigate recent flooding near Holly Cottages.	BS
Clerk to liaise with contractor about cost of works to the green, scheduled for the end of September.	Clerk
Clerk to liaise with Frant Cricket Club about the cost of providing cricket nets.	Clerk
Clerk to seek further quotes for maintaining the two churchyards in the Parish.	Clerk
Clerk to liaise with Mrs Bladon about options for play equipment.	Clerk
Clerk to write to JAKK UK to confirm works to the Eridge sign, after amendments to the specifications in the quote.	Clerk
Clerk to seek additional quotes for new parking posts in BYG.	Clerk
Clerk to find out the dimensions of the circular bench.	Clerk
Cllr Best to forward contact details and photographs to Cllr Rutherford who will, in turn, write to the landowner (via the agent) about the possibility of forming a green in Eridge.	GB/WR
Clerk to seek quotes for keeping the brambles around the VAS near the school in check.	Clerk
Clerk to write to Mr. MacGregor-Gould about relocating the noticeboards in BYG>	Clerk
Clerk to liaise with Frant Primary School about the use of Wealdlink.	Clerk
Clerk to inform the Friends of Bells Yew Green about WDC's proposal to submit the phone boxes in Frant and BYG for listing.	Clerk