

FRANT PARISH COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FRANT PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT FRANT MEMORIAL HALL, FRANT ON WEDNESDAY 7th MARCH 2018 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Rutherford - Chair
Cllrs Mrs Howell, Mrs Wallis, MacDonald-Brown, Crookshank

Mrs R. Karim - Clerk
County Cllr Bob Standley
County Cllr Francis Whetstone
Mrs. Jan Steadman
Mr. David Huskisson
Mr. William Patrick
Ms. Deborah Park
3 members of the public

1. To receive apologies.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs Best, Rowland and Stevens. Apologies were accepted.

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

None.

3. To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on 17th January 2018.

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

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

4.1 It was agreed that Cllr Rutherford would meet with Mr. McGregor-Gould to identify a location for the circular bench. Carried forward. **Action: WR**

4.2 Cllr Rutherford said he would contact the land agent re: the letter concerning the formation of an area of open space in Eridge. Carried forward. **Action: WR**

4.3 The Clerk said she had received one quote for renewing the path across the green in Frant and was awaiting quotes from two others. Carried forward. **Action: Clerk**

4.4 Cllr Standley said he had passed on the information about the issues of road safety and speed limits on the BYG road. He acknowledged, however, that it was unlikely to be a priority for Highways at this time. Completed.

4.5 Cllr Wallis said she had spoken with the BYG Cricket Club who had confirmed they were happy for a new dog bin to be placed adjacent to the main gate to the Club and to possibly contribute to the cost. It was agreed that subject to confirmation about the price and style, the Parish Council should order a bin and subsequently add it to the register of fixed assets. **Action: Clerk**

4.6 The Clerk said she had written to both TWBC and WDC concerning land at Spratsbrook Farm and had received acknowledgement letters from both Councils. Completed.

4.7 The Clerk said she had received information about the see-saw and associated surfacing. On agenda to discuss.

4.8 The Clerk confirmed she had written again to The George PH for confirmation about the cost of the Christmas Fair lights but had not yet received a response. Carried forward. **Action: Clerk**

4.9 The Clerk said she had spoken with Jakk UK who confirmed they were due to start work on the village sign in Eridge during the week beginning 5th March or early in the week beginning 12th March. Completed.

4.10 Cllr Standley confirmed that Highways would manage the Himalayan Balsam on its land near to the Wadhurst turning. This would likely happen in March/April. Completed. Mrs Steadman noted that the current contract with Orchard Landscapes included £100 for managing this growth and this could now be deducted. **Action: Clerk**

4.11 The Clerk confirmed that she had written to the owners of The Limes, after which they had promptly cut back the heather away from the pavement. Completed.

4.12 The Clerk confirmed that the details for the trustees of the BYG Village Hall had been updated on the Charity Commission's website. Completed.

4.13 Cllr Wallis said she had met with a representative of BCM Construction at the BYG Village Hall. Following this, BCM Construction confirmed they were happy to carry out the necessary repair works to the hall building. Councillors were keen to minute their thanks to the company for this offer of help.

4.14 Cllr MacDonald-Brown said the unauthorised 30mph stickers in Little Bayham had been removed. Completed.

4.15 The Clerk confirmed that she had written to Enforcement about the structures in the woodland near Tate Fencing and the new gateway being formed on Dundale Road. Cllr Rutherford noted that the response from Enforcement had been circulated to councillors and they were satisfied with the response. Completed.

4.16 The Clerk said she had written to WDC concerning the street sign near Barelands at BYG and was awaiting a response. Carried forward.

5. Public Forum.

Proposal to revive a football club in Frant

Mr. Patrick addressed the Parish Council to inform them about his proposals to relaunch the football club in Frant, using the field behind the primary school. He explained that the club would be for recreational purposes only, with no managers or coaches involved. He said he expected three informal games this year with probably two games in spring and two in autumn, in the future. He noted that the pitch would be non-regulation, at about 80m. This would have the combined benefit of enabling continued physical access to the allotments and the site for the annual bonfire and it would deter formal league fixtures, helping to maintain the friendly nature of the club. Mr. Patrick said he was working closely with the Frant Open Spaces Group (FOSG) who had kindly agreed to pay for the minor works needed to create the pitch and a new bench. She asked if the Parish Clerk could write to the Group to confirm that the new club can use the field. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr Crookshank enquired whether it was the intention of the club to be Parish-wide, drawing in players from both BYG and Eridge. Mr. Patrick responded that his initial thoughts were that it would be a Frant village club but that including the other villages was, of course, an option.

Cllr Rutherford thanked Mr. Patrick and said he welcomed the football club being revived in the Parish. It was **resolved** to allow access to the club and Cllr Rutherford asked that Mr. Patrick keep the Parish Council updated about progress. He also said that, in due course, an agreement between the club and Parish Council should be drafted.

(Mr. Patrick left the meeting at 7.50pm)

Other matters

A local Frant resident introduced himself and raised the issue of traffic in Frant village and the problems with parking. He asked whether a one-way system was an option. Cllr Rutherford said that this idea had recently been revisited and he noted that there was opposition to a one-way restriction from some of the residents on Church Lane.

Mrs Steadman addressed the Council next. She said that FOSG had received a grant from Wealden DC, but that it did not include a contribution toward the new information sign for the green. She also noted that, unfortunately, the grant money could not be given to the Parish Council as a contribution toward the maintenance of the green. She said she was seeking legal advice about this. Mrs. Steadman said FOSG now had its own insurance and she would send a copy of this to the Clerk. **Action: JS**

(One member of the public left the meeting at 7.55pm)

6. Reports from County and District Councillors.

County

Cllr Standley said that ESCC Highways were working hard to repair the potholes that had emerged after the freezing weather.

Referring to the poor weather conditions and the resulting problem with no or limited water supplies, Cllr Standley noted that the communication from SE Water had been disappointingly limited. He noted that the problem had been raised to an 'incident' level and was being considered by the Strategic Coordinating Group, run by the police. Cllr Standley said the problem with water shortages had highlighted the need for an updated register of vulnerable people in the parish as well as an emergency/resilience plan. Cllr Rutherford noted that this was now done at county level.

Cllr Standley also raised the issue of library closures across the county.

(Mrs. Steadman and Mr. Huskisson left the meeting at 8.05pm).

Cllr Whetstone considered that the issue of library closures was a warning for what might happen next year. He explained that inevitable budget cuts year on year meant that ESCC was perpetually having to identify additional services to cut back and make savings on. However, he gave an encouraging example of a library in Forest Row that had remained open on Fridays with the help of volunteers, some of whom had learned to operate the library's computer system.

Cllr Rutherford noted that the 12-week consultation period had begun about whether the recycling centre in Wadhurst should be shut. He recommended that councillors make their opinions known through the consultation. It was also suggested that the Parish Council submit its representations. **Action: Clerk**

District

Cllr Howell made reference to a number of positive statistics concerning Wealden DC. She noted that the District Council had approved a 2.7% increase in the budget (or £5 on a Band D home). She noted some encouraging trends, including that the District Council had climbed up 23 places in the recycling league and that East Sussex had been identified as the safest place to live in the county. Cllr Howell said there were a number of projects underway, including the new crematorium in Horam, various grant schemes and business workshops, and also the Wealden Homes outfit seeking to build new homes and deliver affordable housing.

Cllr Rutherford noted that 2019 would see the next District Councillor elections. He said there were a series of informal drop-in sessions being held by Wealden DC and that their website had more information about these.

7. To consider the application for a new Councillor for the Frant ward.

Ms. Park addressed the Council and gave a summary of her experience. Cllr Rutherford thanked Ms. Park for her interest in joining the Parish Council and suggested that a vote be taken at the end of the meeting.

(Cllr Howell left the meeting briefly at 8.19 and returned at 8.23).

8. Green Spaces.

8.1 To consider options for deterring parking at the green at Bells Yew Green.

Cllr Crookshank noted that the volume of errant parking on the green had reduced during the last month although there were still notable peaks and troughs. He suggested that one way forward would be to erect signs on the green and to build a small bank around the green (it was noted that there had previously been a bank here). He also

suggested that the green was properly tended to, perhaps with planting around the edges. Cllr Crookshank tabled a quote he had obtained for reinstating a bank around the green. It was agreed that at least two other quotes should be sought. **Action: Clerk**

It was also agreed that Cllr Crookshank would obtain quotes for at least four new signs. **Action: SC**

Cllr Wallis noted that just the day before, she had witnessed a tractor and a Highways van parked on the green. Cllr Rutherford said that a road traffic offence would be said to have occurred if certain criteria were met, including if a car was parked within five metres of a junction. He noted that if a vehicle was parked on the green, this would be trespass; this would be a civil issue and not something the police would enforce. He said that under the Inclosure Act 1857, it is an offence to obstruct people's free enjoyment of a green.

(Cllrs Standley and Whetstone and one member of the public left the meeting at 8.40pm)

8.2 To consider options for replacing the see-saw in Frant.

The Councillors considered the three quotes for a new see-saw for the green in Frant and associated resurfacing works. The quote from Sutcliffe Play was discounted on the basis that it was much more expensive than the other two for very similar work. It was agreed in principle to replace the see-saw and provide a new surface but that a reduction in the price should be sought. **Action: Clerk**

There was a discussion around whether the cost could come from CIL monies or from reserves. Cllr Howell offered to ask Wealden DC whether they agreed that the replacement of a piece of play equipment could be deemed as 'essential infrastructure' vis-a-vis the CIL regulations. **Action: JH**

9. To discuss the incoming General Data Protection Regulations and what this means for the Parish Council.

The Clerk gave a summary of the general principles of the new Regulations, due to come into force in May 2018. She also identified the work that the Council needed to do in order to be ready for the incoming legislation. The requirement for the Councillors and Clerk to have generic email addresses (and to no longer use their personal addresses) was discussed. A quote for providing 12 no. new email addresses was approved, subject to clarification as to whether this was a one-off fee or not. **Action: Clerk**

10. To receive an update on the proposed alteration to the Parish boundary.

Cllr Rutherford said that there was little update and the Parish Council were waiting to hear from Wealden DC about the consultation process.

11. To review the ongoing risk assessment of the Parish's fixed assets.

The Clerk noted that further risk assessments need to be carried out on the fixed assets within the Parish. It was agreed that Cllr Rutherford would undertake these for the Frant ward, Cllr MacDonald-Brown for Bells Yew Green and Cllr Best for Eridge. The Clerk said she would circulate the fixed asset register and assessment proformas to the relevant councillors. **Action: WR/AMB/GB/Clerk**

12. Finance (WR).

12.1 To approve the accounts payable.

It was noted that the payment to SE Water for the supply to the allotments should be forwarded to the Allotment Society for reimbursement to the Parish Council. **Action: Clerk**

All the accounts for payment were approved.

12.2 To approve the month-end bank reconciliation.

The bank reconciliation was considered and subsequently approved.

13. Planning (GB)

13.1 To approve the Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 5th February 2018.

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

13.2 To consider licence and planning applications received and make recommendations.

- WD/2018/0193/MFA – Land to the east of Benhall Mill Road, Frant

Variation of Condition 2 of WD/2015/2675/MAJ (erection of dwellings, etc) in order to vary the percentage of affordable housing.

Cllr Howell expressed her dismay at this proposal to reduce the amount of affordable housing that had been previously agreed. She noted that she had called it in to be heard at Planning Committee North. It was agreed that Cllr Rutherford would draft a response, expressing the Parish Council's strong opposition to the application.

Action: WR

13.3 To note applications granted or refused by Wealden District Council and those withdrawn by the applicant(s).

- WD/2017/2375/F – Court Lodge, Bayham Road, Bells Yew Green, TN3 9BJ

Change of use and extension of disused barn to form single dwelling and change of use of land from agricultural to residential: alteration of previously approved application WD/2015/2774/F and 2016/2394/F.

Approved on 12th February 2018.

The decision was noted.

- WD/2018/0032/F – 2 Little Bayham Cottages, Little Bayham, TN3 8BD

New first floor extension and internal alterations.

Approved on 20th February 2018.

The decision was noted.

14. Safety in the Parish (MR).

It was agreed that any road traffic accidents should be reported to the Clerk in order to be recorded on the accident register.

15. Highways and Lighting (SH).

Nil.

16. Communications.

16.1 To agree a date for the summer fair.

It was agreed to hold the summer fair at Frant Primary School on Saturday, 30th June 2018.

17. Horizon Scanning.

17.1 The future of a sustainable village/community.

It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

18. Chairman’s announcements & correspondence for noting.

Cllr Rutherford tabled a letter from ESCC concerning a proposed reduction in the number of grass cuts in the Parish. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask Orchard Landscapes how much they would charge for doing four cuts per year.

Action: Clerk

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

Cllr Rutherford noted that Cllr Hutchings had tendered her resignation from the Parish Council. He asked that a vote of thanks to Cllr Hutchings from the Council be recorded.

(Cllr Howell left the meeting at 9.30pm)

Cllr Crookshank said that, within a short period of time, the BYG Village Hall Committee was being successfully revived, with various volunteers coming forward for the key positions. He asked that the Trustees of the BYG Village Hall, present at the meeting, approve Mr. Robert Wallis as Chairman of the Committee. All the Trustees **resolved** to approve this appointment.

Cllr Wallis asked about the Henry Smith scheme. Cllr Crookshank gave a brief history about it and it was agreed that this would be put on a future meeting agenda.

(Ms. Park and one member of the public left the meeting at 9.35pm)

Cllr Rutherford asked the councillors to vote as to whether the Parish Council should co-opt Ms. Park to the position of councillor for Frant ward. The vote was unanimous and it was **resolved** to co-opt Ms Park onto the Parish Council.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 9.40pm.