

FRANT PARISH COUNCIL

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THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT BELLS YEW GREEN VILLAGE HALL ON 20th APRIL 2022 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Howell (Chair), Crookshank, Rutherford, Steadman
County and District Cllr Standley
Mr. P. Payne

1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting

None.

2. Receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Best, Park and Macdonald-Brown, District Cllr Obbard and County Cllr Taylor.

3. Receive declarations of interests on items on the agenda and changes to the Register of Interests

None.

4. Approve the Minutes of the meeting on 23rd March 2022 as a true and accurate record
The Minutes were **approved** as a true and accurate record.

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

The Clerk confirmed that she had posted information on the website about supporting refugees from Ukraine

In Cllr Park's absence, the provision of a quote for consideration by the Council for new doors at the village hall in Bells Yew Green was rolled over.

In light of Cllr Standley stepping down as Leader of Wealden District Council after over a decade in post, Cllr Howell took the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Cllr Standley for all his hard work over the years, noting that he had been an exceptionally fine leader. She said he had steered the District Council through some difficult patches and was leaving it in a very good position from which to move forward.

6. Public Forum

Mr. Payne said he was intending to use the large room in the village hall in Frant to house his exhibition for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations. After some discussion, it was agreed that he would leave the large hall for other users and would instead set up his exhibition in The Stables.

Mr. Payne enquired as to the outcome of the last public meeting about the Jubilee. Cllr Howell advised that it had been a general round-up of who was going to do what and that an update would be published in Parish News. She also said there would be a further and final meeting in May.

Cllr Crookshank raised the issue of the village sign in Frant. Cllr Howell said it was not on the agenda to discuss; however, she said the Council was intending to approach an architect to produce designs of the sign.

Post meeting note: the Council is not seeking alternative designs from those that Mr Payne has produced; rather, as the Trustees of the green, it is seeking drawings to show what a sign of the dimensions proposed would look like on the green. The reasons for this would be to ensure that the sensitive location of the green in the AONB and Conservation Area and views of it are not harmed.

7. Receive reports from County and District Councillors

Cllr Standley said he had met with the Housing Minister to express concern about the proposed levels of housing; he noted that at his previous meeting, Mr Gove had suggested the report would be published in spring, but it was still outstanding. Cllr Howell said that District Council needed a sound Local Plan. Cllr Standley noted that a number of Councils were pausing work on their Local Plans because of this issue of too high housing numbers.

Cllr Standley went on to talk about Ukrainian refugees, noting they are now being referred to as 'guests'. He said the District Council was doing a lot of work in terms of providing school places and other support.

Cllr Standley said that the Cabinet had approved the next phase of the Integrated Care System, which would bring East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove into one care system. He acknowledged the perennial issue of some care providers being just within other counties (e.g. Pembury Hospital).

Cllr Standley explained the background to the current dispute with the county's refuse collection providers, Biffa, and said there was a meeting scheduled which would hopefully succeed in averting a bin strike the following Monday.

8. Discuss support for families opening-up their homes to Ukrainian refugees

It was noted that two schemes were operating to help Ukrainian refugees; the drawback was that once involved with one scheme, you could not transfer to the other.

The Council **agreed** to using its funds received via the Henry Smith scheme if the situation arose.

9. Highways

9.1 Discuss public feedback about the proposed pedestrian crossing

Cllr Howell said that the meeting held in the village hall in March had been very positive with some useful comments. Cllr Steadman enquired as to the possibility of narrowing the road in this location instead and installing planters. Cllr Howell said this would not be approved by Highways given it was a main arterial road. Cllr Rutherford added that Highways had not even agreed to lowering the speed to 20mph in the High Street and Church Lane where such measures might seem obvious. He suggested that the proposed crossing was intending to provide a safe way to cross, rather than slow the traffic although, inevitably, this would be a welcome side.

Cllr Howell said that a resident had asked whether the beeping noise the crossing would make when people pressed the button could be avoided. Cllr Rutherford said there was an alternative whereby the visually impaired could recognise when to cross without the beeping noise by taking cues from a set of rotating cones underneath. Cllr Standley said he would make enquiries. **Action: BS**

(Cllr Standley left the meeting at 7.50pm)

10. Finance

10.1 Approve the accounts payable

The Clerk added an additional payment to ESALC/NALC for the annual subscription. This and the other payments were **approved**.

10.2 Approve the bank reconciliation

The bank reconciliation was **approved**.

11. Green Spaces

11.1 Approve quote for works associated with new green in Eridge

The Clerk said she had taken advice from the Council's auditor and that he agreed this work could be added to the existing long-standing contract with the current contractor maintaining the Parish's green spaces. The quote was **approved**.

11.2 Consider possibility of a new dog bin in Frant

It was **agreed** that the Parish Council would, in principle, support and pay for the provision of a new dog bin in Frant, subject to the necessary permissions being granted. It was agreed that the separate application fee of £300 imposed on the Church by the Diocese would be discussed in due course. It was agreed that the Clerk would update Reverend Brendan. **Action: Clerk**

11.3 Discuss safety around the playground in Frant

The issue of the safety of children using the playground in the vicinity of the road was discussed. Ways to secure the playground were considered, such as hedging and further types of 'barrier' play equipment, but they were considered feasible at this point. The Council decided to consult Friends of Frant Green Spaces for their thoughts. **Action: CS**

Cllr Howell suggested this could be an opportunity to ask East Sussex County Council (Highways) about imposing traffic calming measures here, perhaps to include a reduction in the speed limit.

12. Communications and Events

12.1 Update on Jubilee celebrations

Cllr Howell said arrangements were coming together and that she had spoken with the Eridge committee and Mrs McGregor-Gould in Bells Yew Green about their events.

12.2 Discuss arrangements for the Annual Meeting

Speakers were discussed and it was noted that Cllr Macdonald-Brown would talk about defibrillators. It was suggested that Cllr Park may wish to talk about the groups of Wealden parishes seeking to address over-development and high housing numbers. In addition, it was suggested that someone from the police speak about community speed watch. **Action: Clerk**

13. Planning

13.1 Wealden Local Plan – rolling item

Nothing to discuss.

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

Cllr Crookshank chaired item 3.2

WD/2021/2812/F – 15 Frant Court, Frant, TN3 9DW

Replace existing wooden shed, increase height of existing wooden fence from 1.80m to 2.0m.
Relocate existing gate from west side to north side. Move yard fence on west side 80cm.

The application was considered to be relatively minor and no objections were raised about this and it.

WD/2022/0617/F – Brook Farmhouse, Bayham Road, Frant, TN3 9BP

Ground floor porch to be undertaken under permitted development. Proposed new dining room to the front of the property replacing an old summerhouse extension. New ground and first floor extension to the rear with a proposed garage replacement.

Councillors noted that the building was not within public view and not a listed building. The Council raised no objections.

WD/2022/0575/LDE – Walnut Tree Cottage, Frant Green Road, TN3 9DE

To confirm that planning permission WD/2014/1657/F was lawfully implemented.

The Council did not have any comments to make on this application.

WD/2022/0494/F – Henley House, Wadhurst Road, Frant, TN3 9EJ

Attached double garage, extension to ground floor to form family room. Extension at first floor to form dressing room.

There was some discussion about the merits of the design and also the possible effect of the wide glazing in terms of Wealden's Dark Skies Policy. On balance, however, the Council raised no objections.

14. Chairman's announcements & correspondence for noting

None.

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

Cllr Crookshank enquired as to progress of the replacement fingerpost from Benhall Mill Lane. The Clerk said she had emailed JakkUK but had not had a response. She said she would follow it up.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Rutherford said that vehicles were still parking on the green in Frant, including contractors' vans despite work having been completed in neighbouring houses. It was agreed that this would be put on the next agenda and Cllr Howell would invite the owner of the road by the green to come to the meeting.

Action: JH

Cllr Rutherford asked whether the base for the Christmas tree in Bells Yew Green could be removed. Cllr Crookshank said he would speak Mr. McGregor-Gould about this.

Action: SC

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 8.25pm.

Actions

Action	By Whom
Make enquiries about alternative crossing devices to avoid 'beeping' noise`.	BS
Speak with FOFGS about ideas re: safety at the playground in Frant.	CS
Plan speakers for the Annual Meeting	Clerk
Follow-up with progress on the replacement fingerpost for BYG.	Clerk
Liaise with Reverend Brendan about the proposed dog bin for Frant.	Clerk
Invite the owner of the road by the green to the next meeting.	JH
Speak to Mr McGregor-Gould about removing the Christmas tree base in Bells Yew Green.	CS

Appendix One

District Cllr's Obbard's Report

District Wide

I expect you will have read that the Leader of the Council, Bob Standley has decided that he will stand down as Leader of the Conservative Group and Leader of the Council from May this year to give his successor a year to get settled into the job before the next Council elections on May 2023.

The Council announced last year that they would set up a Community Lottery to raise money for good causes, and they have now appointed the lottery operator Gatherwell to run the Lottery for Wealden. This company runs lotteries for other Councils and Non-profit organisations in the UK.

Over the Easter holidays the Council is running a public safety campaign to raise awareness of the danger of Cliff falls and getting cut off by the tide with the hashtags #BeCliffAware and #BeTideAware

There have been at least 50 cliff falls in the last year and many visitors are simply not aware of the danger, both at the top and the bottom of the cliff.

The Council prosecuted a company when they cut down several trees on a site near Hellingly in 2018 that were covered by a Tree Protection Order.

The judgement has recently been made and they were fined £17,000 and ordered to pay £7,500 in costs.

You can check if there is a TPO in place by phoning the Council Offices or emailing planning.information@wealden.gov.uk

Nationwide

The WDC website has a page dedicated to the Ukrainian Refugee Crisis;
<https://www.wealden.gov.uk/ukrainian-refugee-crisis/>

It carries the government information on what they are doing and also where residents can find out ways that they can donate or help. As well as a link to the housing team if anyone wishes to offer accommodation for the refugee resettlement scheme.

The visa applications are still going rather slowly, there is a government helpline on 0808 164 8810

The East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service will be the agency carrying out the home checks and the ESCC website has information about a welcome pack here;
Welcoming Ukrainian guests to East Sussex | East Sussex County Council

There is also information about applying for school places.

The payments to refugees and to hosts will be handled by the WDC.

The Government scheme to give a £150 rebate of Council Tax to help with rising energy costs is underway. Residents living in Council Tax band A-D properties are eligible, and if you pay by Direct Debit the Council will pay you automatically sometime in May or June. Anyone who pays their Council Tax by cash or cheque will need to apply for the refund, but the simplest thing to do it to sign up for a direct debit as soon as possible. There may be a discretionary refund for people living in Properties in band E – H.

Planning issues

The application at Yew Tree Barn for a Gym, home office, garden shed and the tennis court has been withdrawn.

The Council has been successful in getting four Court Injunctions to stop the unauthorised residential use of caravans in Buxted, Ninfield, Withyham and Hooe and were awarded costs in all of the cases.

Bin Lorry Dispute

The GMB Union has completed it's ballot of members who have voted to strike. The waste contractor Biffa has received formal notification of the intention to take strike action at the two Wealden depots from Monday 25th April for two weeks.

The Council hopes that any disruption to services can be kept to a minimum.

If there is anything specific you wish me to follow up, I will do my best to do so. You can email or phone on the contacts below.

Cllr Keith Obbard,
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