

FRANT PARISH COUNCIL

clerk@frant-pc.gov.uk / 07903 661581 / www.frant-pc.gov.uk

THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT ERIDGE VILLAGE HALL ON 23 NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Crookshank, (Vice-Chair), Rutherford, Steadman, Macdonald-Brown, Best, Park County and District Cllr B. Standley
District Cllr K. Obbard

Cllr B. Johnstone, Rotherfield Parish Council
Mr J. Bee
Mr. P. Payne
One local resident

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

None.

2. Receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Howell.

Cllr Crookshank extended the Parish Council's thanks to Mrs Ann-Frances Luther for her service to the council and wished her all the best in her future endeavours.

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 19th October 2022 as a true and accurate record

The Minutes were **approved**.

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

The Clerk confirmed that the approach made by a local resident for an oak tree to be planted on the green in Frant would be on the agenda in December.

6. Public Forum (15-minutes - time limit to be extended at the discretion of the Chairman)

The local resident addressed the Parish Council about the planning application for a new access at Brownsgate Cottage onto Mayfield Road. He explained that the alternative access, subject to a long planning and enforcement history, was now blocked off and a new access was now proposed with what he considered to be adequate turning circles on site. He noted Highway's comments on the sight lines. He pointed out that, at present, the family were having to park on the verge opposite the cottage or on the side of the A267 itself; he also noted that he had young children and it was dangerous having to park in these locations.

Mr. Payne told the Parish Council that a new planning application had been submitted seeking a temporary permission for the office building outside The Stables in Frant.

Cllr Johnstone (Rotherfield Parish Council) introduced herself and said she had come to the meeting to listen to agenda item 8.1.

7. Receive reports from County and District Councillors

Cllr Crookshank said that reports had been circulated prior to the meeting (see Appendices 1 & 2).

County

Cllr Standley confirmed that the Parish Council's community match application for £50,000 for the new pedestrian crossing had been successful.

Cllr Standley noted the proposed £2.3 billion government funding for education and said it was a case of 'wait and see' how this would filter down to the county. He noted also that the Planning Bill had been delayed.

District

Cllr Standley said that Wealden's Draft Local Plan was due to be published in mid-January 2023.

Cllr Obbard said that Wealden DC was delivering a webinar about electric vehicle charging. Cllr Park suggested the link to the webinar be forwarded to the villages halls. **ACTION:** Clerk.

8. Highways

8.1 To consider detailed costs of contributing to speed surveys/feasibility study into road safety/calming measures in Eridge

Cllr Johnstone explained that Rotherfield PC had been advised by Highways to collect speed data at three locations in Eridge. The Clerk confirmed that the overall cost of commissioning three studies was £1,066 +VAT. It was **agreed** that Frant Parish Council would contribute 50% of these costs, or £533 + VAT.

9. Finance

9.1 Approve the accounts payable

The Clerk noted an additional payment to be approved of £576 for two Christmas trees from Manor Farm Stud. The slight increase in the payment to the RTPi from £180 to £199 was noted.

The accounts payable were **approved**.

9.2 Approve the bank reconciliation

The bank reconciliation was **approved**.

9.3 Review year to date figures, proposed budget and precept

Cllrs noted the year to date figures and **agreed** with the proposed budget. It was considered that the precept should be increased to reflect growing costs, the likelihood of the delivery of more services/functions being devolved to the Parish Councils and a contingency for unexpected one-off costs. It was considered particularly important given the very large cost of the pedestrian crossing. It was thus **agreed** to review the precept for 2023/24 at the December meeting, once the tax base figure was in hand.

It was **agreed** to proceed with installing replacement and new bollards around the green in Frant and to continue with getting the new green ready in Eridge.

10. Green Spaces

10.1 Agree to repairs to play equipment identified in RoSPA reports

It was **agreed** to ask Mr McGregor-Gould to carry out the more minor repairs in both the Frant and Bells Yew Green playgrounds. It was further **agreed** to liaise with the equipment providers about any other repairs that were identified in the reports.

11. Planning

11.1 To consider response to Wealden DC about the Neighbourhood Development Plan

It was **agreed** that the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the parish was being held in abeyance and that the Parish Council would instead pursue a Parish Plan, taking account of the results of the recent survey of parishioners.

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

WD/2022/2147/F - THE OAKS, 2 SELLBOURNE PARK, FRANT, TN3 9DG

Proposed two-storey rear extension, including demolition of existing conservatory, conversion of existing integral garage to habitable accommodation and the construction of a new, detached three-bay garage/garden store and enlarged parking area (amended plans).

<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=159087>

Cllrs **agreed** to recommend **approval**.

WD/2022/2693/F – BROWNSGATE COTTAGE, MAYFIELD ROAD, FRANT, TN3 9HS

New residential access.

<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=159722>

The problems with access and parking experienced by the family living at Browns Gate Cottage were acknowledged and it was considered not unreasonable for them to seek a safer situation and to not have to park on the fast-moving A267. With that said, Cllrs noted that Highways did not consider the proposals were viable or safe and that the proposed access did not meet current standards for sight lines. It was noted that the feasibility study work along this end of the A267 in Frant may illuminate the issues along here, particularly given that other houses along the same stretch have similar problems. It was **agreed** that the Parish Council **could not recommend approval** if this meant that an unsafe access would be implemented; it was agreed that, ultimately, the decision lay with Highways.

(Cllr Johnstone and Mr Bee left the meeting at 8.02pm)

WD/2022/2686/F – BROOK FARMHOUSE, BAYHAM ROAD, FRANT, TN3 9BP

Single-storey extensions to front to provide porch area and new dining room to replace old summerhouse extension; extension to basement, new ground and first floor extension to the rear and proposed garage replacement.

<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=159714>

Cllrs **agreed** to recommend **approval**.

WD/2022/2463/F – BROOK FARM BARN, BAYHAM ROAD, TN3 9BP

Change of use from annexe to use as independent accommodation (amended plans).

<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=159446>

Cllrs **agreed** to recommend **refusal** on the grounds that the annexe could not practically be independent, given its very close proximity to the main house. Also, concerns were raised that a long term ambition for the current or future owners would be to effectively create a separate dwelling in this location and it was considered that a private arrangement for the payment by a guest family of utilities could be made without separating the link that the current main house and annexe have to one another

WD/2022/2775/FR - THE STABLES, CHURCH LANE, FRANT, TN3 9DX

Temporary planning permission for single-storey detached building to be used as church office for St Albans Church, Frant.

<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=159818>

Cllrs considered it was not clear why a temporary permission was being sought while an appeal is underway given that enforcement action would likely not be taken until if/when the appeal failed. Thus, Cllrs **agreed** that their view remained as per the original application (the subject of the appeal) and would ask Wealden DC to ensure that no enforcement action would take place before the appeal is decided.

WD/2022/2893/F – SPRING COTTAGES, BELLS YEW GREEN ROAD, TN3 9EB

Front single-storey infill and extension. Amendments to window and door openings to rear elevation. Increase in size of rear terrace area.

<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=159945>

Cllrs **agreed** to recommend **approval**.

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

The email from Highways about proposed deterrent/cautionary signage for the rural road network in Bells Yew Green was discussed. It was noted that the size, location and appearance of new signs would be important, as well as the wording on them. It was agreed to arrange a site visit with Highways to discuss the options. **ACTION:** Clerk to liaise with Highways.

The issue of sealing up the part of the green by the entrance to Shernfold Park to stop the parking on the green was discussed. Cllr Rutherford said he would do a site visit to determine what options there were for a satisfactory outcome. **ACTION:** Cllr Rutherford to review options and report back to Full Council.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.24pm.

County Report to Frant Parish Council November 2022

Frant Crossing

I attended and spoke at the Lead member for Transport meeting on Monday and pleased to say the 50K match funding bid was approved.

Highways Contract

The contract has been awarded to Balfour Beatty Local Places who will start in May next year with a 7 year contract with possible extension of an additional 7 years

New Special School in Eastbourne

The need for special school places continues and I was pleased to be attend and speak at the opening this Tuesday of the Summerdown school in Eastbourne

Open Door Scheme

More than 20 businesses have signed up to East Sussex County Council's annual 'Open Doors' scheme.

The scheme is aimed at giving young people real-life experience of the workplace as well as the opportunity to learn about possible career paths. Students will tour buildings such as courts, museums and galleries, meet employees and learn about employability skills and available career opportunities.

Supported by the East Sussex Careers Hub, the scheme will run from November 2022 until June 2023, ensuring that as many Year 7 to Year 13 students as possible can benefit. Several industries will be represented in this year's scheme, including accountancy, manufacturing, engineering and consultancy.

Businesses interested in getting involved with Open Doors and welcoming students can contact

East Sussex County Council Takes Action to Save Vital Bus Service

East Sussex County Council has agreed to subsidise several bus services that were under threat due to falling passenger numbers and rising costs. With bus use struggling to recover to pre-Covid levels

alongside significant increases in operating costs, some operators are having to make changes to services – most of which involve reduced service frequencies. From the end of October, East Sussex County Council will subsidise seven services operating across Eastbourne, Hastings and parts of Rother. The funding will initially be in place until March 2023.

Following the outcome of competitive bids, Stagecoach will continue to run the services which would have been withdrawn with funding from East Sussex County Council. This follows a range of discounts for passengers as a result of County Council funding, including a new £5 East Sussex single operator day ticket, family and group travel tickets, and an off-peak unaccompanied young person £1 flat single fare ticket.

RWS Nov 2022

Appendix 2

District Council Report from Cllr Keith Obbard

Report for Frant Parish Council 23rd Nov. 2022

District Wide

The Boundary Commission for England has published the new proposals for the replacement of the Wealden Constituency.

The proposals and maps are published on their website

<https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/>

The third and final consultation is open now until the 5th December, so less than 2 weeks to make your last comments.

I haven't studied it in detail, but the headline is that the new Constituency will be called Sussex Weald.

It will include the whole of the District Ward of Hartfield, and will contain Crowborough, Wadhurst, Heathfield and Hailsham.

The other new constituency will be called East Grinstead & Uckfield.

Social Housing Rents

The WDC has responded to a government consultation on Social Housing rents.

(WDC has about 3,000 Council Houses for rent)

There is concern in all Local Authorities because of the proposal to introduce a Rent Price Cap.

Whilst this is commendable from the point of view of residents renting their homes in this cost-of-living crisis, it could cause the Council considerable financial problems.

At the moment rents can rise at a rate of CPI+1%.

If rents were to be capped at 5% for example, it would cost the WDC about £1M per year because of the rising prices and the fixed income.

Most of the WDC maintenance contracts are with smaller local firms, they are quite long term, (circa 10 yrs) and index linked to CPI.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The CIL payments for the last year that have been distributed to Parishes around the District has amounted to just over £400,000 which is about 15% of the total that the WDC received from developers.

Parishes have spent this on a variety of projects such as towards new community buildings, street furniture and finger posts, bus shelters, footpaths and other highway work, allotments, towards a mini-bus and on CCTV.

Electric Vehicle Charging points

The Council is putting on a webinar at 11 am on December 1st on the MS Teams for informing Town & Parish Councils, so you are invited to join that and find out more about EV charging and ask more questions.

The link to register for the online webinar is

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wealden-district-councils-ev-charging-network-powered-by-connected-kerb-tickets-465838253757>

If you want more information about the EV Charging point roll-out then contact Thomas Hood at the Council thomas.hood@wealden.gov.uk

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,
Wealden District Member for Withyham Ward.

Cllr.keith.obbard@wealden.gov.uk 07941 578 427