

FRANT PARISH COUNCIL

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The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 7pm on 25th May 2023 at The Stables, Frant

Present: Cllr Crookshank (Chair)
Cllrs Macdonald-Brown, Miles, Steadman

County Cllr Bob Standley
District Cllr Sarah Glynn-Ives

Mrs J Cater, Folly Wildlife Rescue Centre
3 representatives from Inspired Villages
24 members of the public

1. Welcome

Cllr Crookshank welcomed everybody to the meeting and gave apologies for those councillors who were unable to attend.

Cllr Crookshank thanked the councillors for their input and commitment to the Parish Council and said that they were all involved on a voluntary basis and gave up their time to help the local community. He extended particular thanks to the outgoing Chair, Johanna Howell, for her long voluntary service to the Parish Council for over thirty years and her commitment to championing the communities of Frant, Bells Yew Green and Eridge.

Cllr Crookshank also thanked Cllr Standley for his work and input during his time as a District Councillor and said the Parish Council was looking forward to working with him in his continued role as County Councillor.

2. Approve Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12th May 2022

The Minutes were **approved**.

3. Comments from County and District Cllr Bob Standley

County

Cllr Standley gave the following information:

- ESCC has a budget of some £500 million, with 70% being used demand-led for adult social care and children's services.
- Cllr Standley is Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability. There are 600 hundred looked-after children and those who require it, are given 24-hour intensive care at a cost of £20,000 per week.
- Cllr Standley acknowledged the problems of potholes across the county's roads and said that a new contractor, Balfour Beatty, was now in place.
- ESCC has reduced its carbon emissions by just under 29%.

District

A report from Cllr Johanna Howell was circulated.

Cllr Glynn-Ives introduced herself as representing the Green Party at District level. She said an alliance had been formed at Wealden District Council and that the first Full Council Meeting had been very positive, with all parties keen to work together to achieve good outcomes.

4. Talk given by Folly Wildlife

Mrs Cater (a Trustee of Folly Wildlife and a volunteer) gave a very interesting talk about the history and ongoing growth of Folly Wildlife, an animal rescue hospital and centre spread over 9 acres in Broadwater Forest in Eridge. She summarised their day-to-day work and the range of animals they tend to and noted they had some 4,000 admissions per year, at a cost of £18,000 per month.

5. Update given by Inspired Villages about their development in Bells Yew Green

The representatives of Inspired Villages gave an update on the ongoing development of the new retirement village, Little Mount Farm, in Bells Yew Green. The village is for 65+ year olds, with up to 165 homes being built. The village will include a wellbeing centre (with pool), restaurant and café (with public access) and a clinical space, which will be offered to the NHS for use by GPs (also open to the public). The development is now approaching Phases 2 and 3. In response to a question from the audience about the unauthorised felling of trees at the site, they responded that they had apologised for this mistake and were planting new trees at a ratio of 3 to 1, with the remainder of the scheme working around existing trees.

6. Projects the Council has been working on during the last year

Cllr Crookshank referred to the proposed pedestrian crossing, noting it was a project the Council had been trying to implement for almost a decade. However, he said that the costs were spiralling to upwards of £250,000 and the Council was now considering whether this would represent a good use of public funds. Alternative traffic calming measures were thus being considered and the Council would work closely with Highways in the following months. Cllr Standley said he was happy to facilitate this. An holistic approach to such traffic calming would be taken and the Council would look at what can be done in the 'middle' of the village by Frant Court, outside the Abergavenny Arms and near the junction with the Wadhurst Road.

Cllr Crookshank noted the following:

- The Council will be repairing the Grade II listed Albert Well, at a potential cost of some £45,000.
- Parking on the green in Frant remains a persistent problem, as well off-roaders driving on to the green and cricket pitch and causing considerable damage.
- The Council continues its 'day-to-day' work, including but not limited to, maintaining its green spaces, streetlights, bus shelters, benches and other structures, giving its comments about planning applications in the parish to Wealden District Council and working on a number of projects for the benefit of the parish including, for example,

seeking to address the ongoing erosion of the green in Frant and the provision of a new public green in Eridge.

7. Future projects and call for volunteers

Addressed above.

8. Parking on the green in Frant – an ongoing concern

Addressed above.

9. Call for new councillors

Cllr Crookshank said that the Parish Council was low in numbers, with six councillors out of a total complement of 11. He encouraged people to join and to become involved in improving the parish for all residents.

10. Q&A

None.

Cllr Crookshank ended by thanking, Rosie Barnes, the Clerk, for her ongoing work for the Council. He invited everyone to stay and enjoy some refreshments provided by Daisy's Kitchen.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm.