

## **FRANT PARISH COUNCIL**

***Serving the communities of Frant, Bells Yew Green & Eridge***

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### **THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT FRANT MEMORIAL HALL ON 16<sup>th</sup> JULY 2025 AT 7.30PM**

**Present:** Cllr S. Crookshank (Chair), Cllr W. Rutherford, Cllr D. Park,  
Cllr S. Davies, Cllr A. Macdonald-Brown, Cllr S. Davies, Cllr A. Best

DCllr J. Howell  
Members of the public

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

None.

**2. Receive apologies**

Apologies were received from CCll B. Standley, Cllr C. Steadman, Cllr A. Oram and the Clerk.

**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 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 as a true and accurate record**

The Minutes were **approved** as a true and accurate record.

**5. Public Forum (time limit to be extended only at the discretion of the Chairman)**

Mr Huskisson said he thought the tiling on the roof to the Victoria Well was 'not quite right' and suggested the Parish Council contact the contractors before the work is finished. Ms Warwick suggested that information plaques for both the Victoria and Albert Wells could be put in place for visitors and residents alike.

Mr Huskisson said he approached Corylus Ecology, as requested by the Parish Council, to ask if they could act on its behalf to submit representations to the Esquire proposals, once submitted. He said Corylus advised him they had a conflict of interest so could not represent the Council.

Ms Warwick said there was still no progress from ES Highways about signage to reduce speed along the Bells Yew Green Road, notably where it enters Frant village. Cllr Park raised the Clerk's concerns regarding non or poor response of county officials to requests from Parish Council. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the CEO with our concerns, copied to DCllr Howell and CCllr Standley.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**6. Receive reports from County and District Councillors**

**County**

None.

**District**

Councillors gave a vote of thanks to DCllr Howell for raising awareness of issues at Wealden DC.

**7. To consider co-option of a new member to Frant Parish Council**

Councillors **agreed unanimously** to co-opt Mr S Jenkins to the Parish Council, with immediate effect.

**8. To consider licence and planning applications received:**

**8.1 WD/2025/7030/AD – Knowle Grange, Wadhurst Road, Frant**

Proposed erection of a steel portal frame building for storage of agricultural machinery and equipment, harvested produce (apples) and general agricultural storage.

Councillors **agreed** to recommend **approval**.

**8.2 WD/2025/1552/F – Frant Grange, Church Lane, Frant**

Single-storey side extension, new pitched roof corner porch, installation of air source pump and external alterations to existing dwelling.

Councillors **agreed** to recommend **approval**.

**9. Finance**

**9.1 Approve payments**

The payments were approved.

**9.2 Approve the bank reconciliations**

The bank reconciliations were **approved**.

**10. To approve consultancy fees with regard to the proposed Esquire development**

The proposed fees were **approved**.

**11. Green Spaces**

**11.1 To consider alterations to the stepped access to the green in Frant from the Bells Yew Green Road**

Decision deferred.

**11.2 To consider request to park pizza van by the cricket pavilion one evening a week**

Councillors agreed that the van should not be allowed to park on the green; instead it should park on the road, for example, at Warren Ridge, next to the playground.

**12. To nominate a councillor to manage the Dial2Drive initiative**

Cllr Macdonald-Brown explained how the Henry Smith Fund contributions are currently used to enable elderly residents to access medical services via the Dial-2-Drive service. Cllr Davies said she is considering taking on the administration role once Cllr Macdonald-Brown resigns from the Parish Council.

**13. To approve changes by NALC to the model Standing Orders**

**Approved.**

**14. Urgent matters at the discretion of the Chairman, for discussion only**

Cllr Best said there has been hedge cutting along the A26 but he had still not had a response from ES Highways.

Cllr Rutherford suggested we speak with the corner shop in Frant with regards to removing their advertising signs. Cllr Rutherford also requested that we contact enforcement officers about the hardcore driveway outside Browngate.

**ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Crooshank advised that final plans for the pedestrian crossing will be ready next week and then they will be put out to tender.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.50pm.

## Appendix 1

### Report from District Councillor Johanna Howell

Cllr Johanna Howell [Cllr.johanna.howell@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.johanna.howell@wealden.gov.uk)

Dear Councillors

In the 20 years that I have represented my community I have always maintained a non-political stance when it comes to my district reports and I have tried to do that with this report to my parish councils. That said, I strongly feel that there are issues within the administration of Wealden that you should all be aware of and that will affect the parishes and our communities going forward. With this in mind I forward you this report!

A new political grouping known as Wealden Partners has been formally established at Wealden District Council. The group brings together councillors from the Independent and Conservative groups in a joint effort to strengthen the effectiveness of opposition at the Council and ensure that residents across the district continue to be properly represented. While both groups will retain their distinct political identities and maintain full voting independence, they will work more closely under the Wealden Partners umbrella to provide a more coordinated and robust response to decisions made by the Council's ruling Green-Liberal Democrat-Labour Alliance.

The formation of Wealden Partners makes it the largest opposition group on Wealden District Council. The group is being led by Cllr Ann Newton (Conservative), with Cllr David White (Independent) serving as Deputy Leader.

This new arrangement follows a series of controversial constitutional changes introduced by the Alliance, including reductions in planning committee sizes and new limits on substitute members; measures which have made it harder for councillors to participate fully in the democratic process and speak up for their communities, particularly on matters as critical as planning and development.

Email from Chris Bending:

The format of the new Scrutiny and Performance Committee is quite different to what the old constitution required of Overview & Scrutiny. The updates at every meeting from every portfolio holder were removed in the interests of making sure that the committee can better focus its time on the matters it wants to explore. As you will know, the committee has taken on some of the functions previously at AF&G - for example review of Sussex Weald Homes performance and also has a significant new role in the budget setting process, so we have been keen to really focus time where it will help drive better outcomes. In practice this will mean that not every cabinet member will be needed at every S&P meeting, though they may choose to attend (in person or online). The committee can then request the information and updates it wishes to see as part of its work programme and following review of the forward plan.

In practice this therefore means that Portfolio Holders are no longer accountable to scrutiny and their decisions are not scrutinised at the time of making them.

The Alliance has recently taken on a PR firm and appointed a PA to the cabinet, neither of these posts existed before or were deemed necessary, of course this will be at the tax payers expense!

This is a long list of increased spending by a council that will no longer exist in a couple of years!

And finally:

#### **Grants available for village halls**

**The Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund is accepting applications for projects that must be finished by March 2026. Grants up to £75,000 are available to support larger improvement projects to rural community buildings such as full refits and extensions.**

#### **Free Health and Wellbeing Roadshow for residents**

A free wellbeing event is taking place for residents on 10 July at Hailsham Civic Community Hall from 10am-3pm. More than 20 organisations will have stalls and be on hand to help improve residents' health and wellbeing.