

Forest Row Parish Council

Clerk:
Email:

Mr D O'Driscoll
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(Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

To: All members of THE PROPERTY & ASSETS COMMITTEE:
Cllrs. Williams (Chairman), Davies, Hill, Josephson, R Lewin, Miller, Pritchitt, Summers and Wogan.

Community Centre
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Forest Row
East Sussex
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Dear Sir/Madam,
Your attendance is required at a meeting of the PROPERTY & ASSETS COMMITTEE to be held on TUESDAY 3rd MARCH 2020 in the Rose Room of the

Tel:
Fax:
Email:
Website:

Date: 26 February, 2020

Community Centre at **7.30pm**

Mr D O'Driscoll
Clerk to Forest Row Parish Council

THE FIRST FIFTEEN MINUTES WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR RELEVANT QUESTIONS AND REMARKS FROM THE PUBLIC – IF ANY. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO STAY AND OBSERVE THE REST OF THE MEETING.

AGENDA

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – the meeting will start no later than 7.45pm
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW
4. RECORDS OF THE MEETING OF THE PROPERTY AND ASSETS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH NOVEMBER 2019
 - 4.1 To approve the minutes of the meeting of 5TH November 2019
 - 4.2 To consider any objections to deletion of the digital transcript of that meeting
5. CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING
6. CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION
To note the following:
 - 6.1 VENUe works
 - 6.2 Energy consultation with FREC
 - 6.3 Bus shelter cleaning
 - 6.4 Litter Bins
 - 6.5 Pre-school electrical repairs & alarm
 - 6.6 Fingerposts
 - 6.7 The old 'Venu' building – an update
7. FINANCIAL MATTERS . To note financial position at end month 10.
8. CURRENT ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/RESOLUTION
To consider & resolve as appropriate on the following:
 - 8.1 Report received on Community Centre upkeep & decoration works
 - 8.2 The SE end of the Community Centre
 - 8.3 The Weirwood car park
9. CORRESPONDENCE
10. TO NOTE ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL

COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING FOR THE MEETING OF PROPERTY & ASSETS COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 3rd MARCH 2020

- 1-5. Introductory matters follow the standard format. No public interventions have been signified in advance and there have been no objections lodged to the records of meeting.

ACTION: to note/resolve as required

6. CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION

6.1 VENUe works. This has a couple of sub-components:

- the lighting & goal assembly are authorised and will be dealt with as soon as the equipment arrives.
- I am informed that BT has finally agreed to install the internet connection – the contractor aims to do the work at the same time as the lighting.
- there is a small amount of snagging to be attended to.
- I have not yet progressed the fencing issue because of the adverse weather and ground conditions

6.2 Energy consultation with FREC. As mentioned in several 'Briefings', an enhanced insulation scheme is in preparation and we are shortly expecting a visit to look at more efficient heating controls.

6.3 Bus shelter cleaning. The projected cleaning of the wooden bus shelters has been deferred due to the adverse weather. The plan is for the handyman & Steve Kemp to take this on as soon as we have a reasonable run of dry days.

6.4 Litter bins. The siting of the remaining litter bins is waiting on installation of the VENUe lighting and goal assembly.

6.5 Pre-school electrical works and other matters. The electrical works mentioned at the last meeting have been done. Some were essential for safety reasons, some were simply an increased amenity. I have requested that pre-school consider a contribution towards the costs of the latter, and await a reply. However, these costs have meant that I have had, for budget reasons, to take a cautious view over further non-urgent spending on the pre-school premises, although there are a couple of further issues pending.

6.6 Fingerposts. This Committee agreed at the last meeting that Members would advise the office of the location/condition of fingerposts in the parish. No information has yet been received, so this matter remains pending.

6.7 The old 'Venu' building. This Committee decided that the building should be kept on to develop an income stream. Two candidates came forward with business plans for refurbishing and letting the premises. The Finance & Policy Committee felt that both presentations lacked critical details and deferred the issue until there had been a meeting with both candidates to clarify the position.

ACTION: to note and clarify as appropriate

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

A printout for the end of month 10 is attached. I have again excised the VENUe figures (which are shown in summary form separately, and have not yet 'settled down'). I have also

taken out windfall income & expenditure under the CIL scheme, as these are not part of the revenue budget. Performance against forecast should be $\pm 83\%$. Income is running at 90.8% and expenditure at 81.7% (despite necessary overspends on Community Centre enhancement).

ACTION: to note

8. CURRENT ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ RESOLUTION

8.1 Report received on Community Centre upkeep & refurbishment works. This was reported as pending at the last meeting, but the appointed group did a tour of the main building (outside & inside) on 13th November, and produced a report which should be attached to the papers. This does not specify priorities or costings, so the next logical step would seem to be to attend to those issues, account taken of the allocated budget for the coming year, unless any members of Committee wish to suggest additional matters for attention.

8.2 The SE end of the Community Centre. This has been discussed several times but not taken forward. It is referred to in the report under 8.1, which says: "there is a need for the council to arrive at a plan for the use, and therefore for the design, of this area as a whole." For Committee to decide how to proceed: does it wish this to be a project under consideration if a community consultation takes place on capital borrowing?

8.3 The Weirwood car park. In January we received a demand for 'rent' from Southern Water. Since questions had been raised over who actually owns the facility, I did some investigation. The freehold belongs to Southern Water and we took a lease of the area in 1986, which was renewed in 1991 and 2004. There is no indication as to why we took on this liability. The lease actually expired in 2005, but it appears we have continued to pay up annually ever since (thereby creating a 'holdover' of the lease terms). However, with the prospect of an expenditure of £12,000 for resurfacing, I wrote to Southern Water declining to pay this year unless they offered us a compromise on the repair costs. They have said if we do not pay, they will not let 'us' use the facility any more. For Committee to consider.

ACTION: to consider and resolve as appropriate

9. CORRESPONDENCE – none not already available via Councillors Briefing/ Reading.

10. TO NOTE ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 03/10/2019

Month No: 11

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
Property & Assets							
<u>201 Bus Shelters</u>							
2136 BS-Bus Shelters	135	500	365		365	27.0%	
Bus Shelters :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>135</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>365</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>365</u>	<u>27.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(135)</u>	<u>(500)</u>	<u>(365)</u>				
<u>205 Miscellaneous Assets</u>							
1439 Public Seats	0	250	250		250	0.0%	
1442 Litter Bins	135	500	365		365	27.0%	
2551 Offsite Car Parks	39	500	461		461	7.8%	
2553 Grit bins	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
6139 BU - War Memorial	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
7108 PR-Notice Boards	201	350	149		149	57.4%	
Miscellaneous Assets :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>375</u>	<u>3,100</u>	<u>2,725</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,725</u>	<u>12.1%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(375)</u>	<u>(3,100)</u>	<u>(2,725)</u>				
<u>301 Community Centre</u>							
3180 CC-Lettings	22,516	24,000	1,484			93.8%	
3181 CC-Equipment Hire	946	900	(46)			105.1%	
3182 CC-Rents	17,818	20,000	2,182			89.1%	
3185 MISC - incl books/copying)	648	600	(48)			107.9%	
3187 CC Drinks Machine Income	520	500	(20)			103.9%	
3189 Misc Property Refunds	1,688	0	(1,688)			0.0%	
3190 No longer in use	65	0	(65)			0.0%	
4180 Misc Income	275	3,000	2,725			9.2%	
Community Centre :- Income	<u>44,475</u>	<u>49,000</u>	<u>4,525</u>			<u>90.8%</u>	<u>0</u>
3111 CC-Rates & Services	14,591	18,000	3,409		3,409	81.1%	
3116 CC-Upkeep/Cleaning	7,643	10,000	2,357		2,357	76.4%	
3127 CC - Drinks Machine	928	900	(28)		(28)	103.2%	
3136 CC-Enhancement	4,916	2,500	(2,416)		(2,416)	196.7%	
Community Centre :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>28,078</u>	<u>31,400</u>	<u>3,322</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,322</u>	<u>89.4%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>16,397</u>	<u>17,600</u>	<u>1,203</u>				
Property & Assets :- Income	<u>44,475</u>	<u>49,000</u>				<u>90.8%</u>	
Expenditure	<u>28,588</u>	<u>35,000</u>				<u>81.7%</u>	
<i>net income over expend</i>	<u>15,887</u>						
VENUe - non capital income	1971.79						
VENUe - running costs	<u>3654.00</u>						
<i>net income over expend</i>	<u>(1682.21)</u>						

Community Centre (condition, repairs, improvements)

Notes from a meeting for the working group comprising Cllrs. Brett Williams, Jane Wogan, Gwen Pritchett & Vivien Hill. Cllrs. Williams Wogan and Hill met on Weds 13th Nov 2019.

The outside of the building

Walking round the outside of the building it was noted that there are some small voids left from previously removed pipework, missing stones and missing iron airbricks. The damp proof course (DPC) on the north side is sometimes obscured by grass and the level of the earth is often very near the level of the DPC. The DPC is sometimes difficult to follow, there have been at least four building stages in the older part of the building and the DPC level varies. Pointing is missing in places and historic cracks are visible. Some telltales are in place but their date is unknown as are records of checking movement, though they were referred to in the survey done by Anthony Beevor RICS in 2014. These were fitted when the building was owned by ESCC as the primary school.

N.B. FRPC has used a reliable company for some re-pointing which the Listed Building Officer (LBO) has recently allowed. The DPC has been cleared by the outdoor workers recently but it needs checking regularly (how often?). Replacement iron airbricks are available.

The DPC on the east, south and west sides of the building varies in level. These three sides abut the tarmac at base. In some places the DPC is covered and in others is very near the present car park surface. The school playground was resurfaced after FRPC bought the building; this raised the surface. The previous surface was, to some extent permeable.

VH studied the building in 2017 and took photographs, these could be used for comparison with present conditions.

Drains

The surface drain grilles were in reasonably clear, Jane thought they needed to be cleared out on a regular basis (though we now have a 6-monthly maintenance contract with a drainage firm which includes the 'ACCO' drains). The drain surround from the kitchen is cracked, allowing damage to the fabric, greasy debris present marked the overflow extent.

NB This drain does need clearing and the drain surround repaired. The kitchen staff would not have noticed the overflow and at present the drain outlet is not checked by outdoor staff (query? VH)

The 1960s build, east end

The group looked at the outside and inside of this area. It was felt that little could be decided at this inspection as there are so many matters to consider but that there is a need for the council to arrive at a plan for the use, and therefore for the design, of this area as a whole. These rooms have damp feel, the inside wall, once an exterior wall, is very friable through damp and attrition; outside the DPC is very near the tarmac level and rainsplash makes the lower courses damp.

Guttering and Pointing

The new guttering fitted recently has allowed previously damp areas to dry out and rainwater to be carried away efficiently. The recent pointing has prevented damp from entering many areas and allowed previously affected walls to dry out. These two actions have considerably improved the condition of the building.

Inside

The group was able to visit the main hall, the interior of the east end and the corridors only. The main hall was in the process of being painted but this work could only be carried out when the hall is not in use by hirers. This made for a patchy appearance at the time. Similarly, the ceiling showed the marks of the old light fittings (this work has now been completed). There was discussion as to the merits of saving money by using any spare time the staff had to do this sort of work versus paying an outside company to do this all at once. Marek, who was present preparing the room, and was asked for his opinion, suggested that during the school summer holidays the building was generally under-used and that this could be a useful time for redecorating works.

The rooms of the east end of the main hall have been reconfigured to store equipment & materials used by the Repair Café. There is little storage in the building as a whole but it was felt that as and when staff time allows some items could be disposed of.

Some damp patches near the skirting were noticed. VH had explained the cause of the dampness in the Rose Room at a previous council meeting. This historic break in the DPC and alteration of the wall from floor to ceiling height (in 1878) has allowed damp to creep. Some skirting in the main hall and in the parish office needs to be replaced.

Metal Windows

These windows, fitted as part of the inter-war extension, are now in poor condition. The expansion of the metal through rust will be putting pressure on the glass panes, as will expansion and contraction of the metal on this south-facing wall. The doors to the Garden room were replaced some years ago, all agreed they were an excellent match. The previous LBO had approved these so it is likely that similar replacements would be approved. The cost (the quote from 2018 was for £3,000 installed per window) has to be considered and it was agreed that a further meeting regarding these windows would be desirable.

The original ceramic airbrick in this area is now lower than the tarmac laid when the building was purchased by FRPC. The DPC or tarmac lining appears to be some form of lightweight plastic, this had been photographed by VH in 2017. (photos available). The surface drain here is shallow. Being in a well the doors to the Garden Room are in direct line with any flooding of the car park. FRPC had the car park drains thoroughly jetted recently which must have reduced this danger. The new doors should prevent some ingress of water but flooding coming in under the floors from the lower airbrick needs to be remembered.