

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 21st MAY 2024 at 7.30 PM HELD IN THE GARDEN ROOM OF THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

PRESENT: Cllrs. Eichner, Gilbert, Jaffay, La Djoï, Lewin, Rainbow, Summers, Taylor-Smith, Volkens & Waters

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Christie, Cocks, Evans & Scott

NOT PRESENT: Cllr. Hugo

IN ATTENDANCE: The Clerk, Deputy Clerk & 3 members of public

AM1/24 TO ELECT THE CHAIR FOR THE COMING YEAR (AND SIGN THE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE)

Cllr. Gilbert proposed Cllr. Eichner as Chair for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr. Taylor-Smith. **AGREED**

AM2/24 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of the public spoke on the following issues:

- Gilham Lane – some trees were becoming unmanageable and needed attention. The Clerk to look into this and explained that a grant had been applied for.
- A planning application (granted) in Gilham Lane – the resident was advised to contact District Cllr. Patterson-Vanegas.
- Allotments had rats last summer.
- Objected to the large increase in the precept – the Chair gave a brief explanation of why the precept had been increased.

AM3/24 TO ELECT THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL FOR THE COMING YEAR

Cllr. Gilbert proposed Cllr. Jaffay as vice-chair for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr. Taylor-Smith. **AGREED**

AM4/24 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. Christie (away), Cocks (work), Evans (unwell) and Scott (family).

AM5/24 TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION IN RESECT OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS None

AM6/24 TO RESOLVE TO POSTPONE CONSIDERATION OF THE RECORDS OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF FULL COUNCIL

Proposed by Cllr Lewin, seconded by Cllr Eichner and **AGREED**

AM7/24 TO CHANGE THE DESIGNATION IN ALL COUNCIL POLICIES INCLUDING JOB DESCRIPTION FROM 'ASSISTANT CLERK' TO 'DEPUTY CLERK'

Proposed by Cllr. Waters, seconded by Cllr. Taylor-Smith and **AGREED**

AM8/24 TO APPROVE & ADOPT THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE & SCHEME OF DELEGATION **AGREED**

Proposed by Cllr. Waters, seconded by Cllr. Eichner and

AM9/24 TO CONFIRM THE CURRENT COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS

Proposed by Cllr. Eichner, seconded by Cllr. Volkens **AGREED**

AM10/24 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEES & THE PLANING GROUP Finance & Policy; Cllrs.Eichner, Gilbert, Hugo, Jaffay, La Djoï, Taylor-Smith, Volkens & Waters.

Personnel : Cllrs. Evans, La Djoï, Taylor-Smith & Waters

Facilities: Cllrs. Cocks, Gilbert, Hugo, Rainbow, Scott, Summers, Taylor-Smith & Waters

Planning: Cllrs. Eichner, Gilbert, Summers & Waters

Community Services: Cllrs. Christie, Cocks, Jaffay, La Djoï, Rainbow, Scott & Volkens

Cllr. Eichner proposed the above, seconded by Cllr. Volkens and **AGREED**

[Noted that the above will need to be adjusted later to allow for changes in council membership]

- AM11/24 TO APPROVE STANDING ORDERS (2023 VERSION)**
Proposed by Cllr Taylor-Smith, seconded by Cllr Waters and **AGREED**
- AM12/24 TO APPROVE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (2020 VERSION)**
Proposed by Cllr Taylor-Smith, seconded by Cllr Waters and **AGREED**
- AM13/24 TO AFFIRM ADHERENCE TO THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT**
Proposed by Cllr. Waters, seconded by Cllr. Jaffay and **AGREED**
- AM14/24 TO APPROVE STANDING POLICIES**
Proposed by Cllr. Eichner, seconded by Cllr.Taylor-Smith and **AGREED**
- AM15/24 TO RE-AFFIRM THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**
Proposed by Cllr. Eichner, seconded by Cllr. Lewin and **AGREED**
- AM16/24 TO FORMALLY SIGN AND AFFIRM THE CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE**
Cllr. Eichner signed the pledge
- AM17/24 TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**
Ashdown Forest Liaison Committee – Cllrs. Rainbow & Volkers
Commoner of Ashdown Forest – Cllr. Eichner (Chair)
Council for Protection of Rural England – Cllrs. Jaffay & Taylor-Smith
East Sussex Association of Local Councils – Cllr. Volkers
Forest Row Flood Network – Cllrs. Eichner & Waters
Forest Row Festival Committee – Cllr. Hugo
Forest Row Sports Ground Association – Cllr. Waters
New Forest Row Business Group – Cllrs. Gilbert, Scott & Waters
NHS Patient Liaison Group – Cllrs. Gilbert & La Djo
North Wealden Community Transport Partnership – Cllr. Summers
Twinning Association – Cllr. Summers
Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr. Christie
Wealden District Association of Local Councils – vacancy
Wealden DC North Planning Cluster – Cllrs. Gilbert & Waters
- Proposed by Cllr. Eichner, seconded by Cllr. Gilbert and **AGREED**
- AM18/24 TO APPOINT A DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**
Cllr. Lewin proposed that the Clerk be confirmed as the Council’s Safeguarding Officer. This was seconded by Cllr. Gilbert and **AGREED.**
- AM19/24 TO CONFIRM THE INTERNAL AUDITOR**
Cllr. Taylor-Smith proposed that Mulberry & Co continue to be the Council’s Internal Auditors. This was seconded by Cllr. La Djo and **AGREED.**
- AM20/24 TO APPROVE THE ASSET REGISTER**
Cllr. Eichner proposed that the Asset Register be approved, this was seconded by Cllr. Lewin and **AGREED.**
- AM21/24 TO APPROVE THE (CURRENT) INSURANCE SCHEDULE**
After some discussion this was proposed by Cllr. Jaffay, seconded by Cllr. Waters and **AGREED.**
- AM22/24 TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR THE COMING YEAR**
Cllr. Eichner proposed that this be approved, subject to Facilities Committee meetings be changed to 25th June & 23 July (not 2 July). This was seconded by Cllr. Gilbert and **AGREED.**
- AM23/24 TO CONFIRM RE MEMBERS’ & CHAIRS’ ALLOWANCES FOR THE COMING YEAR**
Cllr Gilbert proposed that allowances should be paid as follows:
Basic Allowance: £447
Chairs Allowance; £734
Seconded by Cllr. Lewin and **AGREED**
[The Clerk to provide guidance on the Panel’s statement re a proposed carer’s allowance]

AM24/24 TO CONFIRM SUBSCRIPTIONS

Cllr Taylor-Smith proposed that these be approved, seconded by Cllr. Summers and **AGREED**

AM25/24 TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF DIRECT DEBITS

Cllr. Lewin proposed, seconded by Cllr. La Djoï and **AGREED**

AM26/24 TO CONFIRM THE MILEAGE ALLOWANCE

HMRC continues to fix the mileage allowance at a non-taxable rate of 45p/mile. Cllr. Eichner proposed that this be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Jaffay and **AGREED**

AM27/24 TO DEFER CONSIDERATION OF THE BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

This was proposed by Cllr. Eichner, seconded by Cllr. Gilbert and **AGREED**

AM28/24 TO NOTE AND APPROVE THE RESERVES BUDGET FOR 2024-25

A schedule of reserves had been previously circulated, together with an explanatory note. Cllr. Eichner proposed this be approved. This was seconded by Cllr. Volkens and **AGREED**

AM29/24 TO CONFIRM STAFF TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This had been previously circulated and was **NOTED**.

Cllr. Lewin handed his resignation as Councillor to the Chair. Cllr. Eichner read out his letter, and thanked him for all his hard work and commitment over his 14 years of being a Councillor. This was endorsed by the rest of the Council.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

SIGNED.....DATE.....

CHAIRMAN