

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 5th DECEMBER 2023 AT 7.30PM IN THE GARDEN ROOM AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

PRESENT: Cllrs. Eichner, Christie, Cocks, Evans, Hugo, Jaffay, La Djoï, Lewin, Scott, Summers, A J Waters & A M Waters

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Volkers

NOT PRESENT:

IN ATTENDANCE: The Clerk, Asst. Clerk. District Cllr. Patterson-Vanegas, Rebecca Rainbow, Kate Taylor-Smith and 9 members of public

C162/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A gentleman from Chapel Lane expressed the view that there was insufficient car parking in the village. He thought that parking should be free for residents but charged for visitors. He also felt there should be a greater pride in the appearance of the village and hoped that efforts to improve traffic calming would be pursued.

C163/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies were accepted from Cllr. Volkers (family).

C164/23 RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Meetings of 26th September & 10th October 2023.

Cllr. Lewin proposed that the minutes of the meeting of 26th September be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Gilbert and AGREED.

Cllr. Gilbert proposed that the minutes of the meeting of 10th October be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. la Djoï and AGREED.

There were no objections to the deletion of the digital transcripts.

C165/23 TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW

Cllr. Christie declared a personal interest in item 10.3 of the agenda.

C166/23 INTERVIEW & VOTING ON CANDIDATES FOR CO-OPTION

Both Rebecca Rainbow & Kate Taylor-Smith had submitted brief biographies which had been previously circulated. Council asked various questions and then both candidates left the room.

Cllr. Waters proposed that both candidates be co-opted onto the Council. This was seconded by Cllr. Hugo and AGREED.

Both candidates signed the Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

C167/23 CHAIRS COMMENTS

Cllr. Eichner said that now the Council was 6 months into a 4 year term, he continued to be impressed at the level of skills within the Council.

C168/23 SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT & LIST OF DELEGATED DECISIONS

This had been previously circulated and was NOTED

C169/23 CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2024-25

2 members of public expressed their concern about the effects on residents of any increase in the precept. There was a lengthy discussion on this matter with comments accepted from the Public.

Cllr. Eichner proposed that the draft budget as previously circulated be accepted – resulting in a proposed precept of £650,000. This was seconded by Cllr. Hugo and voted on – Cllr. Summers asked for a recorded vote.

For: Cllrs. Christie, Eichner, Evans, Gilbert, Hugo, Jaffay, La Djoï, Lewin, Rainbow, Scott, Taylor-Smith & Waters

Against: Cllrs. Cocks & Summers

Abstentions: None

C170/23 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OUTPUTS OF THE SECOND COUNCIL 'RETREAT', AND RESOLUTION AS APPROPRIATE

1. Vision statement – Cllr. Lewin proposed that the following vision statement be adopted:
'As part of this vibrant village, our council is here to help build a connected community where we look after the place, bring people closer and make things happen'. This was seconded by Cllr. Rainbow and AGREED.
2. Tuesday meetings: Cllr. Eichner proposed that all Council, Committee and Working Group meetings be on Tuesdays – Planning remain on Mondays, and 'Meet & Greets' to be discussed by Outreach Group. This was seconded by Cllr. Lewin and AGREED.
3. Sociocratic decision making – Cllr. Christie proposed that the sociocratic method of decision making be trialled by Committees and then taken to Full Council with findings. Cllr. Christie proposed this, seconded by Cllr. Lewin and AGREED. Information would be sent to all Councillors.
4. Committee structure review – Cllr. Christie proposed that this be discussed by the Discovery working group. This was seconded by Cllr. Taylor-Smith and AGREED. The Discovery working group membership was confirmed as Cllrs. Christie, Eichner, Hugo, la Djoï, Scott and Taylor-Smith, and Alex Waters (Junior) and Rebecca Dahele.

C171/23 WORKING GROUPS

Two new working groups had been formed – Road Safety & The Shed Project. Cllr. Scott proposed that these both be recognised. This was seconded by Cllr. Eichner and AGREED.

Cllr. Christie had prepared a business case for the formation of a group to investigate the possibility of an investment company to support local energy saving and generation projects. This was discussed briefly and would be deferred to the next Full Council meeting for further discussion.

C172/23 REQUEST FOR CO-OPTION OF A NON-COUNCILLOR TO THE FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Cllr. Eichner proposed that that Alex Waters (junior) be co-opted as a non-councillor to the Facilities Committee if regulations permitted. This was seconded by Cllr. Hugo and AGREED.

C173/23 REPLACEMENT OF TREE LIGHTS ON VILLAGE GREEN

The decorative lights in the trees on the patch of village green behind the Peter Griffiths Hall were approved for replacement at the last Facilities meeting. A quote had been received of £ 4,770.00 plus VAT so had been bought to Full Council for consideration.

Cllr. Summers proposed that in view of the new information, the implementation of this decision would be postponed for the present. This was seconded by Cllr. Hugo and AGREED.

C174/23 MEMORIAL FOR HER LATE MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Cllr. Eichner proposed that this matter be referred to the Community Outreach working group and Facilities Committee before discussion by Full Council. This was seconded by Cllr. Hugo and AGREED.

C175/23 ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

Cllr. Christie conveyed his sadness at the resignation of the librarian.

Cllr. Rainbow asked that that the matter of an allowance to be paid to co-opted members be discussed at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.57 pm.

SIGNED:

DATE.....(Chairman)