

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 8<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2020 AT 7.30PM VIA ZOOM**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. Josephson (Chairman), Davies, Hill, R Lewin, T Lewin, McNally, Miller, Pritchitt, Spackman, Summers, Waters, Williams & Wogan

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Moore

**NOT PRESENT:** Cllr. Withers

**IN ATTENDANCE:** The Clerk, Asst. Clerk, District Cllr. Roy Galley

**C96/20 PUBLIC QUESTIONS:**

None

**C97/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Moore (family).

**C98/20 RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 28<sup>th</sup> July, 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> September and 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 (with 1 small amendment) were proposed for acceptance by Cllr. T Lewin seconded by Cllr. Williams and would be signed as a true record.

No objections were noted to the deletion of the digital transcripts of the meetings of 28<sup>th</sup> July, 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> September. There was a request that any record of the meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 be preserved.

**C99/20 CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING**

Cllr. Pritchitt said that her understanding was that no specific project had to be identified when applying for Secretary of State consent to borrow. The clerk replied that while PWLB do not require the project to be specified, the consent procedure does require this information and in order to preserve the Council's freedom of manoeuvre within the time limits imposed by the AVC legislation, he had specified the recycling project to support the application for consent. If Council later declined to support this project consent would need to be reapplied for but the community consultation would still be valid. He reiterated that this did not tie the Council to any decision.

**C100/20 TO NOTE & APPROVE LIST OF DELEGATED DECISIONS**

The list of delegated decisions had been previously circulated and was NOTED.

**C101/20 TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW**

Name	Min. No.	Category of Interest	Reason
None			

**C102/20 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

The Chairman advised that she was very busy at the moment and if there was a delay in answering her e-mails, she asked for the Members' indulgence.

**C103/20 TO NOTE CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION**

- The new website. The new website is now live. Cllr McNally said that he thought the new website was a huge improvement on the old one. NOTED
- Government 'Kickstart' scheme. Finance & Policy had identified three possible opportunities within our workforce, and we are awaiting contact from the Chamber of Commerce to take this forward. NOTED

- Community Centre regime. Under the 'Tier 2' Government coronavirus restrictions, the office is open for socially distanced personal callers, the public toilets are available and we are able to provide for indoor exercise (ie yoga) and meetings for work/educational purposes subject to prior vetting of a risk assessment. NOTED
- Progress of budget. All budget-holding Committees have now approved a draft departmental budget. A consolidated draft will shortly be provided with a commentary. The aim is to adopt the budget and set the 2021-22 precept at the meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> January. NOTED
- The Clerk advised that a successful interim internal audit report had been carried out. NOTED

#### **C104/20 REPORTS RECEIVED FROM COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

District Cllr. Galley advised that he understood that there had been a recent meeting with Nus Ghani MP and County Cllr. Keith Glazier. He reiterated that the Parish Council had until the middle of March to put in a bid for the waste transfer site.

He advised that the Wealden cabinet was to meet on the 9<sup>th</sup> December and will agree not to increase pay for Council staff unless they earn below £ 24,000. Nor will Members allowances increase.

The District Council will not be increasing their portion of the Council Tax.

#### **C105/20 REPORTS RECEIVED FROM CHAIRMEN OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Finance & Policy Committee – Cllr. R Lewin advised that a grant had been given to Victim Support at the last meeting.

Property & Assets Committee – Cllr. Williams thanked all the staff for their hard work during the pandemic and keeping the Community Centre open when possible.

Community Services Committee – Cllr. T Lewin thanked the staff for carrying on. The Xmas trail organised by the Business Group had been a huge success.

Planning Committee – Cllr. McNally advised that there was nothing to report. Most of the comments made by the Planning Committee had been backed by Wealden District Council.

Amenities & Services Committee – Cllr. Wogan advised that the Council had facilitated use of the greens for hospitality during the pandemic and, where this was used, it was nice to see people sitting outside. The maintenance team were working hard to clear the leaves. The cemetery had won the ICCM award for Cemetery of the Year and some of the prize money would be used to purchase a memorial bench in memory of John Coomber.

#### **C106/20 TO NOTE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr. T Lewin advised that Forest Row Energy Co-op had their AGM recently. They were developing a fuel poverty map of Wealden. There were 7-8% of households in Forest Row in fuel poverty.

#### **C107/20 COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT**

The Community Warden's report had been circulated in advance and was NOTED.

#### **C108/20 THE EFFECT OF THE PANDEMIC ON COUNCIL FINANCES**

A printout of the current state of the Council's finances had been previously circulated and was NOTED

#### **C109/20 THE PROPOSED LONG-TERM TENANCY OF THE OLD 'VENU' BUILDING**

A report from 'On My Side' had been previously circulated detailing the works required on the old Venu building.

Cllr. Josephson proposed that the tenancy was agreed in principle (so works could begin) and delegation be given to the Chairs of Finance & Policy, Property & Assets, and the Clerk to agree the final details. This was seconded by Cllr. Hill and AGREED with 1 abstention.

#### **C110/20 '20'S PLENTY FOR US' SPEED REDUCTION CAMPAIGN**

The possibility of integrating Forest Row into the national campaign was proposed at Community Services on 17<sup>th</sup> November. This was discussed. Cllr. T Lewin proposed that Forest Row join the campaign to have 20mph speed limits in residential areas across East Sussex. This was seconded by Cllr. McNally and AGREED with 1 against.

#### **C111/20 PROPOSAL FOR THE APPLICATION OF A LEGACY**

This was discussed and Cllr. T Lewin proposed that part of the legacy be applied to setting up the Men's Shed. This was seconded by Cllr. McNally and AGREED with 7 for and 5 against.

Cllr. Hill proposed that other suggestions were made to the Clerk by a given date. This was seconded by Cllr. Wogan and AGREED.

Cllr. Josephson proposed that any suggestions be given to the Clerk by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021. This was seconded by Cllr. R Lewin and AGREED.

Cllr. Josephson proposed that item 18 on the agenda – Report from Personnel Committee on Members' & Staff use of Social Media – be deferred to the next appropriate Full Council meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Hill and AGREED.

Cllr. McNally left the meeting at 9.15pm.

**C112/20 TO CONSIDER A MEMBER'S PROPOSAL FOR A 'MEETING FEEDBACK' FORM**

A member had suggested that a feedback form be completed by Councillors following meetings. This was discussed. Cllr. Josephson proposed that there be a trial of this suggestion until the end of January after discussion regarding the practicalities with the Clerk and Asst. Clerk. This was seconded by Cllr. Miller and voted on. 4 for, 5 against and 2 abstentions. REJECTED

It was noted that the proposal could be brought back with additional information or conditions of operation.

**C113/20 NOTICES, CONSULTATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE**

None that had not already been circulated in Councillors' Reading

**C114/20 ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE**

None

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

SIGNED: .....

DATE.....(Chairman)