

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 20th FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7.30PM IN THE GARDEN ROOM AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

PRESENT: Cllrs. Eichner, Christie, Evans, Gilbert, Hugo, La Djoï, Lewin, Rainbow, Scott, Summers, Taylor-Smith, Volkers & Waters

APOLOGIES: Cllr Jaffay

NOT PRESENT: Cllr. Cocks

IN ATTENDANCE: The Clerk, Asst. Clerk. District Cllr. Patterson-Vanegas, County Cllr. Galley, County Cllr Taylor, District Cllr. Coleman and 12 members of public

C20/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of public asked if the Council had asked the Police why there were no PCSO's visible in the village – The Clerk answered that the PCSO for this area would be present at the next Meet & Greet on 6th March.

A resident asked if the installation of a new bus shelter on Hartfield Road outside the Community Centre could be considered. She was advised that this was earmarked for the agenda at the next Facilities meeting on 5th March.

A resident read out a statement regarding the situation in Gaza, asking the Parish Council to write to the Government in support of a ceasefire. It was explained to her that although personally, Councillors may agree with her, it was not within the remit of the Parish Council to become involved in matters of international policy and security.

C21/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies were accepted from Cllr. Jaffay (work).

C22/24 RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Meeting of 9th January 2024. Cllr. Lewin proposed that the minutes be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Waters and AGREED.

C23/24 TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW

None.

C24/24 DELEGATED DECISIONS

None

C25/24 CHAIRS COMMENTS

Cllr. Eichner said that he was heartened by the response to the newsletter. He was very proud of the community.

C26/24 CLERKS REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION

This had been previously circulated and was NOTED.

C27/24 SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

This had been previously circulated and was NOTED

C28/24 PRINCIPAL COUNCILS

County Cllr. Galley explained that County were conducting a campaign for foster carers. Posters would be put up in the area. Patching repairs would soon take place on Priory Road.

Cllr. Lewin asked if the Forest Row Fire Station was safe? And what could be done about the terrible state of Station Road. CC Galley replied that there was no threat to the Fire Station. CC Taylor said she will investigate the situation regarding the road.

County Cllr. Taylor advised that repairs would be made to the A22 towards East Grinstead in April or May. She and District Cllr. Patterson-Vanegas were looking into the situation that had occurred where waste trucks could not enter roads due to bad conditions. She thought this would come under Rights of Way or Ashdown Forest. She was trying to sort this situation out.

A member of public asked if the drains and gullies could be kept clear – especially on the A22.

District Cllr. Coleman spoke about the Local Plan – this would now go out for consultation for 8 weeks from mid-March. She encouraged everyone to engage as this would be in place until 2030.

District Cllr. Patterson-Vanegas advised that she was meeting with Wealden District Council and The Clerk to discuss devolution of services.

C29/24 STANDING COMMITTEES & PLANNING GROUP

Reports were given orally.

Facilities – Cllr. Hugo advised that there was a meeting regarding the ‘Gleeson’ land next week.

Finance & Policy – Cllr. Gilbert advised that grants had been given to various charities and the assets register would be revalued.

Community Services – Cllr. Lewin advised that the market would resume in March. The ‘Shed’ project would be going forward to Wealden for a pre-application meeting shortly.

Planning – Cllr. Summers advised that there had been nothing controversial recently.

C30/24 WORKING GROUPS

Comms & Outreach – Cllr. Taylor-Smith reported that the 1st newsletter had been very well received. This would now be produced quarterly.

The next meeting would be on 27th February. Cllr. Cocks would be taking over the Meet & Greets while Cllr. la Djoï takes a step back. Information was being collected and given to the relevant committees.

The 3D modelling event was taking place over Easter, and this would be advertised soon.

Youth Forum - Alex J Waters reported there had been 3 meetings. 20 people had offered support/skills. And there were 15 youth representatives. There was a meeting on 18th March.

Discovery – Cllr. Christie requested that a workshop be held on 12th March for Nathaniel Whitestone to explain the sociocratic method of decision making. Cllr. Hugo proposed that this go ahead for a cost up to £250 for a single workshop. This was seconded by Cllr. Gilbert and AGREED.

C31/24 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr. Eichner advised that he had attended a Chairs meeting of East Sussex Association of Local Councils.

Cllr. Christie spoke on behalf of the Energy Project and asked if a letter of support could be given from the Parish Council. Cllr. Christie proposed this, seconded by Cllr. Taylor-Smith and AGREED with 1 abstention.

Cllr. Waters passed on a message of thanks for the grant awarded to Forest Row Sports Ground Association.

C32/24 THE CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

Cllr. Eichner proposed that Forest Row Parish Council sign up to this pledge. This was seconded by Cllr. Taylor-Smith and AGREED.

C33/24 BROADCASTING OF MEETINGS

Cllrs. Eichner and la Djoï had submitted a report on options and this was discussed. Cllr. Hugo proposed that a microphone be purchased and meetings be broadcast live on Zoom to gauge interest – this would be explored further in Comms & Outreach. This was seconded by Cllr. Christie and AGREED with 2 against and 2 abstentions.

C34/24 A COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The issue of cemetery space was discussed. Cllr. Eichner proposed the Comms & Outreach consider this matter further with the possibility of this issue being featured in the next newsletter. This was seconded by Cllr. Waters and AGREED.

C35/24 ADOPTION OF A NEW STAFF HANDBOOK

This matter was deferred to a future meeting due to time constraints.

C36/24 THE 'FOCUS' HELPLINE

Cllr. Christie proposed that this be cancelled. This was seconded by Cllr. Volkens and AGREED

C37/24 ASSET INVENTORY COSTS

Cllr. Gilbert proposed that the Clerk be authorised to go ahead with a re-valuing of assets, including any associated costs. This was seconded by Cllr. Hugo and AGREED

C38/24 URGENT TREE WORK

Cllr. Hugo proposed that this work go ahead at the quoted cost, This was seconded by Cllr. Scott and AGREED.

C39/24 FESTIVAL GRANT APPLICATION

Cllr. Eichner proposed that there be an extra-ordinary meeting to discuss this matter before 31st March (after a Festival committee meeting). This was seconded by Cllr. la Djoï and AGREED.

C40/24 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Cllr. Eichner proposed that the Annual Parish Meeting take place on Tuesday 14th May. This was seconded by Cllr. Hugo and AGREED.

C41/24 GARDEN COMPETITION

This matter was deferred to a future meeting.

C42/24 AUTUMN RECEPTION/VOLUNTEER EVENT

This matter was deferred to a future meeting.

C43/24 RENAMING THE MAIN HALL

Cllr. Lewin proposed that a commemorative plaque be 'unveiled' at the Annual Parish Meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Eichner and AGREED.

C44/24 ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

Cllr. Waters asked that the lease for the Junior Football Club pitch be discussed.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

SIGNED:

DATE.....(Chairman)