

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 25th FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.30PM IN THE GARDEN ROOM AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

PRESENT: Cllrs. Eichner (Chair), Christie, Cocks, Evans, Gilbert, Jaffay, Killick, Matthews, Rainbow, Scott, Summers, Taylor-Smith & Waters

APOLOGIES: Cllrs la Djoï & Volkens

NOT PRESENT:

IN ATTENDANCE: The Clerk & Deputy Clerk. County Cllrs. Galley & Taylor. District Cllr. Patterson-Vanegas & 1 member of public

C12/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

C13/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies were accepted from Cllrs. la Djoï (prior commitment) & Volkens (ill health)

C14/25 RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of 14th January 2025 were proposed for acceptance by Cllr. Eichner, seconded by Cllr. Killick and AGREED.

C15/25 TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW

Cllr. Jaffay declared an interest in minute no. C21/25 4. as a Director of WeGrow.

Cllr. Summers declared an interest in minute no. C21/25 5. as a family member is a resident who has made representations about the project

C16/25 DELEGATED DECISIONS

These were previously circulated and NOTED

C17/25 CHAIRS COMMENTS

None

C18/25 CLERKS REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION

This had been previously circulated and was NOTED.

C19/25 SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

This had been previously circulated and was NOTED

C20/25 ORAL REPORTS FROM PRINCIPAL COUNCILS

County Cllr. Taylor gave a report: There had been a cabinet meeting today and there had been much cutting of services to get the budget approved. The matter of drainage outside The Seasons probably would not be investigated until April but other investigative drainage works were taking place in the village.

County Cllr. Roy Galley gave a report: He said that ESCC had to produce a balanced budget and it had been hard. The May elections had been cancelled.

District Cllr. Patterson-Vanegas gave a report: She said that it was important that Parish Councils should be involved in any upcoming consultations regarding the devolution issues. Wealden would hold an on-line briefing event soon. Grants had been given to the Orchard Project and the shed project.

C21/25 ORAL REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

1. Finance & Policy Committee – Cllr. Gilbert explained that he was working through the Policies with Carolyn Coomber and they were about half way through them. In general, they were fit for purpose. The Grants Policy would be taken to Finance & Policy for revision. The Complaints Policy needed more clarity. The Emergency Plan needed a working group to look at other plans and produce a Plan. Cllr. Gilbert proposed that a working group be formed for this purpose. This was seconded by Cllr. Killick and AGREED. Members to be Cllrs. Christie, Eichner, Gilbert & Killick plus an Officer.
2. Community Services Committee – Cllr. Taylor-Smith reported that all services were working well but more volunteers were always needed.
3. Comms/Outreach Working Group – Cllr. Taylor-Smith reported that this group was meeting regularly and were getting ready for the Big Model Village event on 7/8/9 March. This would focus on the What's On Board which Cllr. Taylor-Smith reported was planned to be an analogue version of a noticeboard and they were hoping to get businesses involved and events advertised. Also the Village Green – what would people like to see and it be used for. Cllr. Taylor-Smith proposed that this upcoming event was endorsed by Council. This was seconded by Cllr. Evans and AGREED.
4. Community Orchard Working Group – Cllr. Jaffay reported that the trees had been planted, and the event had been a success. Twelve tree guardians had been appointed for the next year.
5. Gleeson Land Working Group – The proposal would now be recommended to the Facilities Committee for acceptance
6. Shed Working Group - Cllr. Waters said that they were hoping for a grant from Wealden District Council, but criteria had to be met.
7. Facilities Committee – Cllr. Matthews gave a brief report of the last meeting.

C22/25 ORAL REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

1. Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr. Christie reported that they were trying to improve energy efficiency at the Village Hall
2. FRSGA – Cllr. Waters thanked the Parish Council for the recent grant. The lease with East Sussex County Council was still ongoing.
3. Cllr. Eichner reported that he had tried to attend the last two NALC conferences for young Councillors but one had not had enough attendees and the other had not been held.

C23/25 REPORT, OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS FROM THE DAY OF REFLECTION

A report made from a Councillor's notes taken at the meeting had been circulated. This was discussed. Cllr. Jaffay said that she wanted the Standing Orders to be looked at and revised. The Clerk agreed to provide a summary/commentary of the core policies to assist the process. Cllr. Eichner proposed that Councillors be given two months to read the report and read Standing Orders to come to the next Full Council meeting on 29th April with any questions. This was seconded by Cllr. Jaffay and AGREED.

C24/25 PERIODIC ROTATION OF ROLES

There was much discussion around this topic and Council was reminded that all Chair and committee roles were reassigned at the Annual Meeting of Council in May.

C25/25 A VILLAGE GREEN WORKING GROUP

Cllr. Scott proposed that a working group be formed to look at Foresters Green – uses and future plans. This would report to Facilities Committee. This was seconded by Cllr. Taylor-Smith and AGREED.

Membership to consist of: Cllrs. Jaffay, Rainbow, Scott, Taylor-Smith and an officer. Cllr. Scott to organise meetings etc.

C26/25 IMPLEMENTATION ROUTES FOR COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

A draft policy had been considered by Finance & Policy Committee and been circulated. Cllr. Taylor-Smith proposed that this policy be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Waters and AGREED with 1 abstention.

C27/25 THE FUTURE OF THE ENHANCED LITTER/STREET CLEANING PROPOSAL

Cllr. Gilbert had attended a meeting with representatives from Wealden District Council. They had indicated that they may be willing to contribute to the cost of a mechanical pavement cleaning machine – Cllr. Gilbert to follow this up.

C28/25 ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

None

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

SIGNED:

DATE.....(Chairman)