

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.30PM IN THE GARDEN ROOM AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

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

**APOLOGIES:** Cllrs. Cocks & Volkens

**NOT PRESENT:** Cllr. Gilbert

**IN ATTENDANCE:** The Clerk, Asst. Clerk. District Cllr. Patterson-Vanegas, and 8 members of public

**C129/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Three representatives from the Pre-School spoke about the issues facing them at the moment, leading to their request for a rent holiday.

To accommodate one of the public present, Cllr. Eichner proposed that item 22 on the agenda be moved to item 15. This was seconded by Cllr. Lewin and AGREED.

**C130/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were accepted from Cllrs. Cocks (prior commitment) & Volkens (family). County Cllrs. Taylor and Galley were unable to attend.

**C131/23 RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Meetings of 25<sup>th</sup> July & 16<sup>th</sup> August 2023. Cllr. Lewin proposed that these be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. A.J Waters and AGREED. There were no objections to the deletion of the digital transcripts.

**C132/23 CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETINGS.**

None

**C133/23 TO NOTE & APPROVE LIST OF DELEGATED DECISIONS**

Noted

**C134/23 TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW** None.

**C135/23 CHAIRS COMMENTS**

Cllr. Eichner said that he was very impressed with the efforts made by Council so far and he thanked the Councillors and the Community.

Cllr. Eichner reported that there were two councillor vacancies due Cllrs. Harvey & A J Waters stepping down. At the start of October these would be advertised, either for an election or co-option, following standard procedure.

Cllr. Eichner thanked Tom Harvey & Alex J Waters for their work and enthusiasm and wished them both all the best for the future.

**C136/23 TO NOTE CLERKS REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION**

1. Public library lease – the draft lease is still awaited.
2. Crittall window developments – The consultant had visited today. He had advised that the windows did not need replacing but could be repaired. He would supply a list of reputable tradesmen to contact for quotes. Secondary glazing would also be required.
3. Cemetery land developments – research into a possible alternative site is proceeding positively.
4. Staff changes – Chris Harrison's last day would be Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September, a kitchen assistant had been employed and an extra youth worker had been taken on. Individual details of the arrangements would be dealt with under confidential business.
5. Casual vacancy – there were two vacancies
6. Community Christmas Celebration – For practical reasons, this was now being held at the Community Centre.

**C137/23 SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT**

This had been previously circulated and was NOTED

### **C138/23 PRINCIPAL COUNCILS**

District Cllr. Patterson-Vanegas reported that Wealden District Council had saved Uckfield Leisure Centre, the drafting of the Local Plan continues, and she thought that the Parish Council should think about having a Neighbourhood Plan.

District Cllr. Coleman had sent a report that had been previously circulated.

### **C139/23 STANDING COMMITTEES & PLANNING GROUP**

Cllr. Summers – Planning Group – reported orally that Planning had not dealt with anything controversial.

NOTED

Cllr. Lewin – Community Services – a report had been previously circulated and was NOTED.

Cllr. Gilbert – Finance & Policy – No report

Cllr. Eichner proposed that an item of urgent business be considered (under S/O 3(x)) to elect a Chair of Facilities Committee following Cllr. Harvey's resignation. This was seconded by Cllr. Lewin and AGREED

Cllr. Eichner proposed Cllr. Hugo as Chair of Facilities. This was seconded by Cllr. Summers and AGREED  
Cllr Scott volunteered to take the place on Facilities vacated by Cllr A J Waters.

### **C140/23 WORKING GROUPS**

Community Outreach – a report had been previously circulated. Cllr. Jaffay had requested a budget: the Clerk advised that expenses could come out of the current Service development budget. NOTED.

Discovery – Cllr. Scott reported that there had been a couple of meetings. There would be a strategy meeting on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30-9.30 to prioritise projects.

Comms – Cllr. Eichner advised that the website and newsletter would hopefully launch before the end of the year. He asked for help and contributions from other Councillors.

Cllr. Christie asked about internal communications training – Cllr. Eichner said that he would work on a plan for this.

### **C141/23 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr. Lewin reported - Forest Row Energy Co-op – There had been a meeting last week of FR Energy. They were hoping to foster cooperation with One Zero and Ovesco. Further meetings would be held in the next few weeks.

Cllr. Lewin reported - Ashdown Forest Parish Liaison Group – there was a meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September, but there was nothing of significance to report.

Cllr. A M Waters – Forest Row Sports Ground Assoc – Had attended a meeting last week. Another representative from the Council was required. An application for a grant would be submitted soon.

Cllrs. Scott & la Djoï were meeting with Forest Row Business Group on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup>.

Cllr. Hugo – Forest Row Festival – They were reviewing their format and would be looking for support for planning & set up.

### **C142/23 COMMUNITY WARDEN**

A report had been previously circulated and was NOTED

### **C143/23 SUPPORT FOR THE CLIMATE & ECOLOGY BILL**

A formal statement had been previously circulated. Cllr. Eichner proposed that this be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. A J Waters and AGREED with 2 abstentions.

### **C144/23 REQUEST FROM PRE-SCHOOL**

A copy of the request for a rent 'holiday' had been previously circulated, including figures supporting their request. After discussion, Cllr. A J Waters proposed that a 6 month rent 'holiday' be given. This was seconded by Cllr. Eichner and AGREED.

Cllr. Scott proposed that a working group be formed under Finance & Policy be formed to look at long term sustainability. This was seconded by Cllr. A M Waters and AGREED.

**C145/23 STREETLIGHT PROPOSAL**

A proposal to change one third of streetlights to LED had previously been approved by Facilities committee. Details had now been previously circulated. The cost would be £ 11,550 (ex VAT) and could be split between Community Infrastructure Levy and the streetlight maintenance budget. Cllr. A J Waters proposed that this be accepted and be bought back to Facilities to investigate any health implications and possible mitigation measures. This was seconded by Cllr. Christie and AGREED, with 2 abstentions.

**C146/23 ACCESSIBILITY OF MEETINGS AND MINUTES**

There was discussion on this matter and possible suggestions to be investigated. Cllr. Christie to send details of an ‘Owl’ (audio visual conferencing aid) to Community Services Committee for discussion and possible inclusion in the budget.

**C147/23 POSSIBLE PRESENTATION ON COMMUNITY HOUSING**

It was AGREED that the Clerk would distribute a Doodle poll for available dates for a presentation by AiRS.

**C148/23 PROPOSED YOUTH FORUM**

Cllr. A J Waters explained how this could be formed. His report is attached to these minutes for reference. This could be run as part of the Youth Service, and he would be liaising with the Youth Leader as to how this would work. Council were in support of this venture.

**C149/23 REQUEST FOR OUTDOOR STAGING**

A request had been made by a community member, and this had been previously circulated. Cllr. Eichner proposed that the idea was supported in principle, but the practical details would have to be researched further. This was seconded by Cllr. Lewin and AGREED.

**C150/23 COOPERATION WITH WILDHART RADIO**

Martyn Phillips from Wildhart Radio spoke about how there could be co-operation between them and the Parish Council. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the next Communications meeting. Council were supportive of the idea and looked forward to finding new ways of collaborating.

**C151/23 AUTUMN/VOLUNTEER RECEPTION**

There was discussion on this matter, and it was felt that all volunteers should be acknowledged. Cllr. Eichner proposed that a dinner be hosted in recognition of the team with a reception next year for all volunteers together with awards. This was seconded by Cllr. A J Waters and AGREED.

**C152/23 SOCIOCRATIC METHOD**

This matter was deferred to a future meeting.

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

*Pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the committee believes that the public and press should be excluded from the meeting on the grounds of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

Minute No: C153/23 is appended as a confidential minute.

**C154/23 ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE**

Cllr. Summers asked that the market costs be looked into.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

SIGNED: .....

DATE.....(Chairman)

# Youth Forum Proposal

## The Vision:

To create a regular forum for Young People (13-25 years old) in Forest Row to have their voices heard, raise issues they are facing, and provide a space in which they can generate ideas that can be fed back to the Council. The Forum will be youth led using a co-creation model, with a support network around it that can adapt to the needs of the Forum as it evolves. The Forum aims to be a safe and inclusive space in which young people can communicate with one another honestly and openly, a space which is empowering and engaging for young people.

## What we need:

1. Support – We are proposing the Council supports in principle the creation of a Youth Forum within the Community Services Working Group or within the VENUE itself.
2. Budget – Although costs for running the Forum will be low, we have free use of the VENUE and have a team of volunteers to support it, we anticipate a few costs. In particular, initial printing costs and potential costs for future workshops depending on what comes out of the Forum. This could either be covered by an increase to the VENUE's existing budget or a separate budget under Community Services.
3. Process – We need to establish a process by which feedback from the Forum can be passed onto council, this could be as simple as a regular update with the potential for young people to present proposals approved by the Forum to the council.

## Timeline:

- October – Initial planning meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup>, develop vision and build support network.
- November – Develop structure and processes. Begin spreading the word through postering/word of mouth/VENUE.
- December – First meeting of the Forum (if group feels we are in a place to do so).
- 2024 – Host regular meetings (monthly) and adapt and evolve Forum according to needs.

**Proposed by**  
**Alex J Waters**