

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2023 AT 7.30PM IN THE GARDEN ROOM AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. Eichner, Christie, Gilbert, Hugo, La Djoi, Lewin, Summers & A M Waters

**APOLOGIES:** Cllrs. Cocks, Evans, Jaffay, Scott & Volkens

**NOT PRESENT:**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** The Clerk & Asst. Clerk. 2 members of public

**C155/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Jo Keel requested that the railings at the back of the Community Centre be painted white or cream to assist the visually impaired. It was agreed that this would be dealt with as a maintenance issue.

**C156/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were accepted from Cllrs. Cocks (holiday), Evans (work), Jaffay (family), Scott (work) & Volkens (family).

**C157/23 RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING**

Cllr. Eichner proposed that these be deferred until the next ordinary meeting of Council. This was seconded by Cllr. Lewin and AGREED

**C158/23 TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW** None.

**C159/23 APPROVE NEW KITCHEN EQUIPMENT EXPENDITURE**

Cllr. Gilbert proposed that the quote previously circulated for a new oven and associated works be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Eichner and AGREED.

**C160/23 CONSIDER THE 2024-25 BUDGET**

There was considerable discussion around this subject. It was agreed that the precept would have to be increased for 2024-25 to cater for increased costs, and potential projects were mentioned, and approximate costs provided where possible.

Salary increases for staff and the possibility of extra staff were discussed.

Cllr. Eichner said that he felt that as this was the first budget for this 'new' council, any rise could be more readily justified in the first year.

He noted that there had been requests for some accessible apparatus in the children's playpark.

He also suggested that an audio/visual conferencing camera should be budgeted for, to facilitate public access to meetings.

The Asst. Clerk would obtain quotes for dual bins and associated costs, for consideration.

More budget for staff and Councillor training should be included.

Pavement cleaning and overall village maintenance was considered to be of importance, possibly in cooperation with the District Council.

Branding, a new website and a regular newsletter should also be included.

The men's shed, emergency planning and road safety would also need a budget.

There was a request for consideration of a preliminary budget to research a community energy project.

There was a consensus that the Clerk should provide two budgets for consideration— one with a precept of £550,000 and one with a precept of £700,000. The former would mean an approximate increase of £47 per year for a Band D property, or about £1 per week, the latter approximately £113 per year, or £2.17 per week,

**C161/23 ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE**

None

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

SIGNED: .....

DATE.....(Chairman)