

Forest Row Parish Council

Clerk: Mr D O'Driscoll
Email: parishclerk@forestrow.gov.uk



(Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

To: All members of THE PROPERTY & ASSETS COMMITTEE:
Cllrs. Williams (Chairman), Davies, Hill, Josephson, R Lewin, Miller, Pritchitt, Summers and Wogan.

Community Centre
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Dear Sir/Madam,
Your attendance is required at a meeting of the PROPERTY & ASSETS COMMITTEE to be held on TUESDAY 5th NOVEMBER 2019 in the Rose Room of the Community Centre at **7.30pm**

Date: 30 October, 2019


Mr D O'Driscoll
Clerk to Forest Row Parish Council

THE FIRST TEN MINUTES WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR RELEVANT QUESTIONS AND REMARKS FROM THE PUBLIC – IF ANY. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO STAY AND OBSERVE THE REST OF THE MEETING.

AGENDA

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – the meeting will start no later than 7.45pm
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW
4. RECORDS OF THE MEETING OF THE PROPERTY AND ASSETS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2ND JULY 2019
 - 4.1 To approve the minutes of the meeting of 2nd July 2019
 - 4.2 To consider any objections to deletion of the digital transcript of that meeting
5. CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING
6. CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION
To note the following:
 - 6.1 Pointing Repairs
 - 6.2 Energy consultation with FREC
 - 6.3 Bus shelter cleaning
 - 6.4 Litter Bins
 - 6.5 BT public phone box
 - 6.6 Pre-school floor & electrics
 - 6.7 Upgrade of alarm systems
7. FINANCIAL MATTERS 1. To note financial position at end month 7.
8. CURRENT ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/RESOLUTION
To consider & resolve as appropriate on the following:
 - 8.1 Community Centre upkeep & decoration works
 - 8.2 The old Venu building
 - 8.2 The SE end of the Community Centre
 - 8.3 The Weirwood car park
9. FINANCIAL MATTERS 2. To consider and adopt a draft departmental budget for 2020-21
10. CORRESPONDENCE
11. TO NOTE ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL

PROPERTY & ASSETS COMMITTEE

BACKING PAPERS FOR MEETING 5th NOVEMBER 2019

Agenda item	Description	Page nos
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7	Financial report to mid-month 11	3
8.2	Proposal for use of the Venu for a 'Men's Shed'	4-5
	Proposal for use of the Venu by 'On My Side' charity	6-8
9	Draft revenue budget for Property & Assets 2020-21	9

COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING FOR THE MEETING OF PROPERTY & ASSETS COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 5th NOVEMBER 2019

- 1-5. Introductory matters follow the standard format. No public interventions have been signified in advance and there have been no objections lodged to the records of meeting.
ACTION: to note/resolve as required

6. CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION

6.1 Pointing repairs. The essential repairs were done in August, at a cost of £1680 + VAT. We were told more of the modern cement needed replacing, but my instructions were to deal only with places where the mortar was loose or had fallen out. We can always repeat the exercise, but the proportion dealt with this time was under the Listed Building threshold.

6.2 Energy consultation with FREC. FREC have now had all our energy data and have constructed an 'energy profile' for the Community Centre. I will be meeting Esmé Wild shortly to discuss practical improvements.

6.3 Bus shelter cleaning. The metal shelters have now been pressure cleaned, and are looking much better. There has not yet been an opportunity to deal with the wooden ones.

6.4 Litter bins. We acquired four new litter bins with CIL funds. One has been put in Lower Road, another in Upper Close, and we await instructions where to place the others on Foresters' Green.

6.5 BT public phone box We have told BT we have no objection to its removal.

6.6 Pre-school floor & electrics. Pre-school contacted us in the summer holiday to say the flooring in their main hall was coming apart. As the original 'Marley' tiles contained a small amount of asbestos, it was decided to replace it immediately with modern vinyl sheeting. Unfortunately, we have had to bear the cost. The pre-school have since requested 'a couple of extra electric sockets'. On investigation, however, their current system turned out to be dangerously overloaded and rectifying it is beyond the capacity of our handyman. I am awaiting a quote for remedial work.

6.7 Upgrade of alarm systems. Isolating the pre-school sensors rectified the frequent false alarms earlier in the year, so in view of budget constraints, I have postponed upgrading the Community Centre system. However, the pre-school will need a stand-alone upgrade.

ACTION: to note and clarify as appropriate

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

A printout for the end of month 7 is attached. I have again excised the VENUe figures, which are part capital, part revenue and have not yet 'settled down'. I have also taken out windfall income & expenditure under the CIL scheme, as these are not part of the revenue budget. Performance against forecast should be 58.3%. Income is running at 53.7% and expenditure at 50.9% (despite necessary overspends on Community Centre enhancement).

ACTION: to note

8. CURRENT ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ RESOLUTION

8.1 Community Centre upkeep & decoration. At the July meeting, Committee resolved:

“that a sub-committee be formed to note in detail, what is needed in the building. To report to the next meeting. This would consist of Cllrs. Hill, Pritchitt, Williams & Wogan and the Clerk.” Since no meeting took place during the summer, I chased this up on 25th September, but I believe no ‘tour of the building’ has yet taken place. This makes it difficult: a) to say what is needed and in what order of priority and b) to budget accordingly.

ACTION: to resolve on how to take forward

8.2 The old Venu building. At the July meeting, Committee resolved:

“that the idea of a ‘Men’s Shed’ be investigated further to see how much interest there was and be brought to the next Property & Assets Committee meeting.” Sara Smart has researched the idea and her position paper is attached to the backing papers.

Simultaneously, we have received a proposal for use of the building from Mr Alistair Bailey, which is also attached to the backing papers. And finally, the pre-school have expressed an interest in making use of the building (on a paying basis) for a their ‘after-school club’. It appears they too would be prepared to do refurbishment work as part of the deal.

ACTION: to consider the proposals received and resolve as appropriate

8.3 The SE end of the Community Centre. At the July meeting Committee resolved:

“that Cllr Josephson speak to current users of the Community Centre for their views and opinions of what could be done. This information to be brought to the next Property & Assets meeting.” I also chased this up on 26th September, but to date no ‘soundings’ have been received. This makes it difficult: a) to say what would be desirable, and b) since major works refurbishment would probably require borrowing, how this can be factored into the budget.

ACTION: to resolve on how to take forward

8.4 The Weirwood car park. At the July meeting, Committee resolved:

“to incorporate the re-surfacing of the car park in next year’s budget.” I have identified a contractor willing to take on the job and he has quoted £12,125 + VAT for a full resurface (patching will no longer suffice). In the absence of objection, I am factoring this into the forthcoming revenue budget.

ACTION: to consider and resolve as necessary

9. DRAFT DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET FOR 2020-21

I circulated budget preparation materials to Committee on 28th August, together with: “a budget preparation sheet for you to record your suggestions for items – income or expenditure – for the coming year.” There were no suggestions from any Member, so I have drafted the budget on the usual principles of allowing for a modest inflationary uprating, known future commitments and a contingency for unknown unknowns. I attach the resultant spreadsheet, in which this year I have incorporated a narrative to assist in interpreting the figures. Please think carefully about this topic, bearing in mind that there are some gaps in our information – as noted above.

ACTION: to consider and adopt a draft departmental budget

10. CORRESPONDENCE – none not already available via Councillors Briefing/ Reading.

11. TO NOTE ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 03/10/2019

Month No: 7

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
Property & Assets							
201 Bus Shelters							
2136 BS-Bus Shelters	135	500	365		365	27.0%	
Bus Shelters :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>135</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>365</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>365</u>	<u>27.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(135)</u>	<u>(500)</u>	<u>(365)</u>				
205 Miscellaneous Assets							
1439 Public Seats	0	250	250		250	0.0%	
1442 Litter Bins	135	500	365		365	27.0%	
2551 Offsite Car Parks	39	500	461		461	7.8%	
2553 Grit bins	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
6139 BU - War Memorial	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
7108 PR-Notice Boards	0	350	350		350	0.0%	
Miscellaneous Assets :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>174</u>	<u>3,100</u>	<u>2,926</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,926</u>	<u>5.6%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(174)</u>	<u>(3,100)</u>	<u>(2,926)</u>				
301 Community Centre							
3180 CC-Lettings	12,835	24,000	11,165			53.5%	
3181 CC-Equipment Hire	534	900	366			59.4%	
3182 CC-Rents	10,493	20,000	9,507			52.5%	
3185 MISC - incl books/copying)	457	600	143			76.2%	
3187 CC Drinks Machine Income	241	500	259			48.3%	
3189 Misc Property Refunds	1,688	0	(1,688)			0.0%	
3190 No longer in use	65	0	(65)			0.0%	
4180 Misc Income	0	3,000	3,000			0.0%	
Community Centre :- Income	<u>26,314</u>	<u>49,000</u>	<u>22,686</u>			<u>53.7%</u>	<u>0</u>
3111 CC-Rates & Services	7,515	18,000	10,485		10,485	41.8%	
3116 CC-Upkeep/Cleaning	5,145	10,000	4,856		4,856	51.4%	
3127 CC - Drinks Machine	589	900	311		311	65.5%	
3136 CC-Enhancement	4,251	2,500	(1,751)		(1,751)	170.1%	
Community Centre :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>17,500</u>	<u>31,400</u>	<u>13,900</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>13,900</u>	<u>55.7%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>8,814</u>	<u>17,600</u>	<u>8,786</u>				
Grand Totals:- Income	<u>26,314</u>	<u>49,000</u>	<u>22,686</u>			<u>53.7%</u>	
Expenditure	<u>17,809</u>	<u>35,000</u>	<u>17,191</u>			<u>50.9%</u>	
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>8,505</u>						

A 'MEN'S SHED' FOR FOREST ROW

What is a Men's Shed? The UK Men's Sheds Association is a national movement and the support body for Men's Sheds across the UK. They support the development of as many Men's Sheds as possible, for the benefit of men's health and wellbeing.

Men's Sheds are similar to a person's own garden shed – a place to pursue practical interests at leisure, to practice skills and enjoy making and mending. The difference is that garden sheds and their activities are often solitary in nature while Men's Sheds are the opposite. They're about social connections, friendship building, and sharing skills and knowledge.

Sheds are whatever the members (or Shedders as they are known) want them to be. Although labelled sheds, they often aren't sheds at all. They can be empty offices, Portakabins, warehouses and garages. Some Sheds are purpose built workshops, but they rarely start out that way. Many Sheds get involved in community projects too – restoring village features, helping maintain parks and green spaces, and building things for schools, libraries and individuals in need. Activities in Sheds vary greatly, but you can usually find woodworking, metalworking, repairing and restoring. This would complement the Repair Café activities and could be an offshoot of their activities at other times outside the usual Repair Café hours. The Sheds typically attract older men, but many have younger members, and some have women too. Whatever the activity, the essence of a Shed is the connections and relationships between its members and something we could easily create here in Forest Row.

Why do we need one? For a long time, research has shown the negative impact of loneliness and isolation on a person's health and wellbeing. Recently we have seen more evidence come to light that shows loneliness and isolation can be as hazardous to our health as obesity and excessive smoking. Surveys from mental health charities are finding that millions of people report feeling lonely on a daily basis. Men typically find it more difficult to build social connections than women, and unlike women of a similar age, less older men have networks of friends and rarely share personal concerns about health and personal worries. It is not the case for all men, but for some, when retirement comes, it can feel like personal identity and purpose is lost. Men's Sheds can change all of that. The 2011 census showed that the village had a retired population of 14.7%, with 18.8% over 65+ and 27.4% of the population was a one person household.

Sheds are about meeting like-minded people and having someone to share your worries with. They are about having fun, sharing skills and knowledge with like-minded people and gaining a renewed sense of purpose and belonging. As a by-product of that they reduce isolation and feelings of loneliness, they allow men to deal with mental health challenges more easily and remain independent, they rebuild communities and make individuals' lives worth living. Men's Sheds are vital.

Why The Venu? The Venu building is now the most obvious space to house the project, in the spaces available to us at this present time, it is a self-contained unit and has its own facilities including a kitchen and disabled access toilet and ramp. With little money invested we could get a group up and running quickly. The room would need to be given a deep clean, a coat of paint and kitchen facilities reinstated.

By Council giving me the opportunity to look at using the old Venu building as a possible site for the Men's Shed/Place of Welcome, which was agreed in principle at a previous Community Services council meeting, it has enabled me to start to progress the idea. I had a meeting with 2 of the Village agents from Action in Rural Sussex to discuss the funding possibilities and how to start a consultation. The process would be a 3 stage one:

1. Ask for volunteer help to come and clean/repair/repaint the building to get it to an appealing and useable state with a minimum spend.
2. Invite people to come and look at the space and offer ideas for use. We would suggest 3 or 4 of Councils own options and allow a 'what's your idea?' section. For example:
 - a. Place of Welcome (Wellbeing Hub)
 - b. Men's Shed
 - c. Dual use building designated for certain groups only
3. We would then collate the results and see what works for the Parish Council and the community. This would then be used as a community consultation for funding purposes. I have been assured there are pots of money available from funders for projects like this up to £25,000.

I was put in touch with a man who is interested in supporting our Men's Shed, he has his own purpose built workshop, but it is out at Twyford so a little out of the village for this kind of project. He came and visited the Venu and gave me lots of tips on what we would need to consider for the building to be a suitable site for a full on workshop. These included:

1. The electrics would need checking to see if they can support the extra wattage of the power tools needed-This cost would be around £1500-2000 to be done properly.
2. An extractor fan would be needed for the sawdust removal.
3. Lockable cupboards would be needed for the power tools.
4. CCTV reinstated/installed.
5. The noise levels if power tools were being used.

I have asked Repair Café volunteers if they would be interested in being involved and have had a couple of them come forward to say they would like to be. I have not trailed the idea much within the community as I needed a more solid plan, which we now have.

First project ideas would be cleaning up and preparing the donated tools for the tool library/library of things and maintaining and manning the tool library.

Sara Smart
Community Development Office
29/10/2019



To: Mr. David O'Driscoll, Clerk to the Council, Forest Row Parish Council
Community Centre, Hartfield Rd, Forest Row RH18 5DZ

From: Alistair Bailey Director, On My Side, Administrative Office,
16 Colchester Vale, Forest Row, RH18 5 HJ.
Landline 01342 824723 Mobile: 07739 759960

Date: 10th October 2019

Proposal for the use of the 'old' Venu building

This is a Concept Paper for a Resource Centre serving people with disabilities:

On My Side would to make an agreement between Forest Row Parish Council and On My Side for the exclusive use of the 'old' Venu building to re-purpose it from youth centre provision to providing a resource centre for people with disabilities. On My Side is a not for profit Company limited by guarantee. We are recognised as a charity by HMRC and have applied for registration as a charity with the Charity Commission (our application is in a queue and awaiting approval).

On My Side will employ a staff member to develop the service strategy, initially for two/three days a week, but with a view to bringing the centre into full time use. The service to be provided on a not for profit self-funding basis with income generated from attendance fees, service charges, and fundraising activity (we have the offer of a fundraiser to assist this work). The centre will use a mix of paid and skilled staff, combined with voluntary effort to provide a drop-in facility (café), information service, art and craft activities, workshops and clubs. The focus will be on provision of support for people with a learning or physical disability, including older people. We will also use the resource centre as a base to make arrangements for work and work-related placements in the village and to support placements for our 6/7 tenants who have a learning disability. They will be supported with outreach staff attending, or visiting placements.

Purpose:

On My Side is currently providing a supported accommodation service in Fairborne House, Chapel Lane (previously Abbeyfield House) for 6/7 adults with a learning disability. The majority of the tenants already had a programme of activities during the day. However, many of these are at some distance and involve use of various forms of transport across the Ashdown Forest. There is a budget allocation for these placements.

We are also aware of many adults with learning and other disabilities in the village who need some daytime support. This may be as simple as a 'drop-in' coffee shop, where there is a friendly face. Alternatively, it may be more sophisticated, such as assistance in understanding the benefits system and how to access direct payments so as to be able to employ a personal assistant. We already provide a research and



information service to parents of people with a learning disability who need assistance with navigating the benefits system and understanding the availability of local provision.

There is some funding in each person's individual budget for daytime activity support, approximately £50.00 per day per person. On My Side can make better use of this resource when activities are based in Forest Row village centre. We would like the parish council to consider allowing us to put the building to use for ourselves, but to also include other users – to develop a resource centre for people with disabilities – for all ages. We would anticipate that there will be other local people with a learning or physical disability who would make use of this provision as there is very little available in this area of East Sussex.

From this base we can also develop micro business ideas such as food shopping, arts and craft products, admin work, gardening, car cleaning, visiting, house cleaning etc. We can also have a limited but regular cafe drop in information and research centre. There may also be possibilities to work with the parish council on village improvement projects and support for older people.

We anticipate that more and more people will be receiving budgets in the form of health and social care direct payments over the next 5 – 15 years, but they will need appropriate service provision to make appropriate use of these budgets. This is best provided on a localised basis, but often there is no local 'gateway' where people can both obtain support, but also find a way to contribute towards the welfare of others in need within their community. A healthy balance is achieved when people are provided with support, but in turn also realise that they have much to contribute also.

People with disabilities need something to do during the day and many are able to make a work or work-related contribution. People with a learning or physical disability can be very conscientious workers and gain self-esteem when they are able to give, rather than constantly receive. The venue has suitable facilities for this work, including wheel-chair access, a bar counter, a toilet for people with a disability and sufficient space for small group activities. We would need to establish a phone line and internet connection, however.

On My Side would use primarily volunteer work to refurbish and improve the building. We have the offer of advice from a surveyor and a building contractor on a pro bono basis. We have a small budget so that we can 'match fund' applications to grant giving bodies. We have recently repaid a short-term loan for £600,000 from a local well-wisher and believe that we could raise a loan again, if required. Long term we would anticipate the development of a purpose-built resource centre, assuming we can identify a suitable location.

Our business model will allow a core element of self-funded activities, with additional activities being dependent on the availability of funds for time-limited projects. Other income generating activities may be workshops, classes and micro business initiatives.



On My Side has already demonstrated the ability to transform local resources into a viable business. We have good depth of management expertise and experience of managing community facilities such as a youth and community centre (Brighton) and neighbourhood centre (Catford, Lewisham).

If this concept paper is attractive to the parish council, then we would welcome an opportunity to expand upon this proposal in consultation with councillors and officers. Perhaps you could advise me of a way forward in that event?

Follow-up Contact:
Alistair Bailey,
Director, On My Side.

PROPERTY & ASSETS BUDGET

	2018-2019 Budget	Actual	%/forecast	Comments	2019-2020 Budget	To month 6	%/forecast	Year End	Comments	2020-2021 Budget
INCOME BUDGETS										
3180 CC lettings	23000	25972	112.9		24000	10790	45	22000		22000
3181 CC equipment hire	900	1036	115.1		900	421	46.8	900		900
3182 CC rents	20000	18157	90.8		20000	7159	35.8	22000		22000
3185 Misc office income	300	591	197		600	342	57	600		600
3187 Drinks machine	500	610	122		500	201	40.3	500		500
3188 Grants & donations	0	278	0		3000	1714	0	2000	overpayment refunds	10000
3306 VolG income	0	0	0		0	645	0	3200	hirings to yr end	12000
TOTAL	44700	46644	104.3		49000	21272	42.1	51200		68000
EXPENDITURE BUDGETS										
2136 Bus shelter upkeep	500	6	1.2		500	0	0	200		500
1439 Public seats	250	826	330.4	paid from donation	250	0	0	0	repairs only	250
1442 Litter bins	500	1496	299.2	paid from CIL	500	135	27	50	fixings only	500
2551 Offsite car park	500	75	15		500	39	7.8	0		12000
2553 Gritbins	0	0	0		500	0	0	250		500
6139A War memorial (FRPC)	2000	2380	119		1000	0	0	0		500
6139B War memorial (grant)	7140	7140		paid from grant	0	0	0	0		0
7108 Notice boards	500	71	14.1		350	0	0	0		250
3111 CC rates & services	20000	18259	91.3		18000	7899	43.9	18000		18000
3116 CC upkeep & cleaning	10000	10077	100.8		10000	6578	65.8	12000		10000
3127 Drinks machine	900	931	103.5		900	330	36.7	500		900
3136 CC enhancement	14500	13843	95.5	gutters, drains, flooring	2500	4251	170	5000	incl pre-school floor	2500
TOTAL	49650	55104	111		35000	19232	50.1	36000		45900
(TOTAL excl 1439/1442/6139B)	48900	45642	93.3		3000	3462	115.4	3600	incl. set-up equipment	1000
3304 VolG non-youth eqpt					9750	903	9.3	5000		9750
3305 VolG running costs					47750	23597	49.4	44600		56650
TOTAL										

Commentary: In the last full year, income was slightly up on forecast, and expenditure (after deduction of those items funded from other sources such as CIL) slightly under forecast. The current year income budget allowed for a modest increase in hirings, for some amount in grants, and for a modest amount in hiring income from the first months of the VENUE operation. Next year, we can expect CC hirings to continue as before, VENUE hirings to go up, and rents to show an increase due to the new leases. We also need to add in a promised legacy of £10K. On the expenditure side, the current year has to include: slightly higher than expected CC upkeep costs, the unexpected expense on the pre-school floor, with reimbursement unlikely, some one-off non youth set-up costs for the VENUE and an estimate for running costs. In the coming year, we need to factor in a full resurfacing of the Weirwood car park, for Community Centre costs to continue at more or less the current level, and for VENUE running costs to be not less than the business plan estimate of £9750. There are some uncertainties in these figures, as we do not yet have a VENUE rates bill, which will be backdated, nor have we yet incurred internet costs. It may be prudent to peg the expenditure forecast to last year's figure (some £1100 higher) to give some flexibility. We have the advantage of assistance from CIL monies for P&A projects, but the CC continues to need significant refurbishment.