

Forest Row Parish Council

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

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To: All members of the COMMUNITY SERVICES
COMMITTEE:
Cllrs. T Lewin (Chairman), Davies, Josephson, R Lewin,
Miller, Moore, Pritchitt, Waters and Wogan

Tel:
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Dear Sir/Madam,
You are required to attend a meeting of the
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE to be held on
**TUESDAY 7th DECEMBER 2021 in the
Garden Room at the Community Centre at
7.30pm.**

Date: 1 December, 2021

pp *Driscoll*
Mr David O'Driscoll
Clerk to Forest Row Parish Council

THE FIRST FIFTEEN 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 FOLLOWING ITEMS (INCLUDING DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS)**
4. PRESENTATION BY FROW FRIENDS
5. RECORDS OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH OCTOBER 2021
 - 5.1 To approve the minutes of the meeting of 12TH OCTOBER 2021
 - 5.2 To consider any objections to deletion of the digital recording of that meeting
6. CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING
7. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS
8. CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION
9. FINANCIAL REPORT & BUDGET 2022/23
To consider and adopt a draft departmental budget for 2022/23
10. **REPORTS ON SERVICES**
 - 10.1 Market
 - 10.2 Medical car service
 - 10.3 Hearing aid service
 - 10.4 EV charging unit
 - 10.5 'Gages' community lunches
 - 10.6 Thursday Club
 - 10.7 Youth Service
- MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION**
 11. To consider and resolve as appropriate on the Repair Café being run independently – report attached.
 12. CORRESPONDENCE
 13. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY THIS COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL

**COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING FOR THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES
COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 7th DECEMBER 2021**

1. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS** – None notified in advance
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - None notified in advance
3. **TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION** Members who have a financial interest in any of the items covered by this agenda may wish to declare a personal interest. But Members need to be realistic and observe a sensible 'de minimis' judgement, otherwise the provision becomes trivialised.
4. **PRESENTATION BY FROW FRIENDS**
5. **TO DEAL WITH RECORDS OF MEETING.** Meeting of 12th October 2021.
6. **CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING** Any points of information arising from the previous meeting that can be dealt with briefly.
ACTION: to discharge as appropriate
7. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS** Cllr T Lewin will update the Committee on the current status of the Committee's remit and activities including the Men's Shed
8. **CLERK'S REPORT ON PROGRESS (MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION)**
Any necessary comments on pending matters not dealt with in the foregoing item.
ACTION: to note
9. **FINANCIAL MATTERS & BUDGET**
The draft budget for 2022-2023 is attached to the agenda and has already been considered by the Committee Chair. As in previous years, it shows the last complete year, the current year to the half-year (with predictions to the year-end), and proposals for the coming year. The budget as adopted by this meeting will of course be subject to further scrutiny and possible amendment by 'Star Chamber' in December and any further representations by Members before the composite budget is adopted in January.
Please note that queries should be submitted to the Clerk before the meeting if possible.
ACTION: to note
10. **CURRENT SERVICES.** These will be covered by reports from:
Sue Young (market/ medical car service/ hearing aid maintenance),
Cllr T Lewin (EV charging unit),
Sandra Ayles (Gages & Thursday Club),
Melissa Rey-Mesher (youth service)
Please raise any queries in advance of the meeting.
ACTION: to note
11. **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**
A report from Sara Smart is attached – also a proposal for the Repair Café to be run independently. A decision is required.
13. **ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL**

Note on the draft Comm.Serv budget for Committee consideration

The commentary to the draft budget spreadsheet notes that the Community Services budget has been significantly affected over the last two cycles, both by the pandemic and by internal changes to the service provision. The flagship services of the market and Gages have continued to perform well throughout, but the increased expenditure under the cost codes for 'wellbeing' and youth services have been matched by a corresponding growth in income receipts. [it should be noted that the demise of the Car Club was cost-neutral, since it had always been self-funding]. Even with the retrenchments caused by the pandemic in the current year, the departmental budget has continued to meet its overall target of a modest operational surplus.

That remains the goal for the coming year, but the following factors should be noted:

1. There is still some uncertainty resulting from the general economy, but the budget is predicated on the continued health of the market, Gages and youth services, as the Committee's main income contributors.
2. There is also some uncertainty as to Council's commitment to community service development, and with the likelihood of the Repair Café being 'midwived', it is difficult to predict other significant income streams with confidence, although one would hope that attention will be given to seeking grant assistance for any project growth.
3. Road safety has been dealt with by Amenities for some time, but the Scheme of Delegation makes it explicitly the responsibility of Community Services, so the code is being transferred.
4. It is likely, with the current prominence being given to climate change and environmental protection, that Council may wish to adopt or promote measures to save energy, save resources or modify consumption. At the request of several Members, a new code is therefore proposed for expenditure on such services as may fall under the heading of environmental support. However, please note that this is another potential crossover category, since the Scheme of Delegation also puts within the remit of Amenities "encouragement of sustainable development in the Parish."

Following discussions with the Chairman, a draft budget is accordingly submitted for consideration by Committee. The figures are not set in stone, although as drafted they do result in a balanced revenue budget for the coming year.

DOD
30/11/2021

COMMUNITY SERVICES BUDGET

	2020-21				2021-22				2022-23		
	Budget	Actual	% forecast	Comments	Budget	To month 6	%/forecast	Year End	Comments	Budget	Comments
INCOME BUDGETS											
2677 Car Hire Club	13000	644	5.0%					n/a	ceased operation		
2678 Medical transport	300	113	37.7%		300	107	35.5%	300	post-covid estimate	300	unchanged
2679 Cycle Hire scheme								n/a	ceased operation		
2905 Repair Café & wellbeing	2000	1092	54.6%		2000	805	40.3%	1500	post-covid estimate		assumes R/C midwifed
3184 Market income	6000	6181	103.0%		6000	8377	139.6%	10000		9000	assumes 10 mth/year
3480 Gages sales	20000	22831	114.2%		20000	9839	49.2%	20000		20000	unchanged
3680 Thursday Club subs	400	0	0.0%		400	45	11.2%	200		400	unchanged
4676 Youth income	1000	632	63.2%		1000	1833	183.3%	2250	post-covid estimate	2500	assumes current numbers ²⁵
4180 Misc income	0	645	0%		0	0	0.0%	0	none expected	0	grants not allowed for
TOTAL	42700	32138	75.3%		29700	21006	70.7%	34250		32200	
EXPENDITURE BUDGETS											
2554 Wealdlink	900	916	101.8%		1000	458	45.8%	1000		1000	assumes unchanged
2601 Medical transport	200	45	22.5%		200	0	0.0%	100	post-covid estimate	200	assumes unchanged
2602 Car Hire Club	13000	3780	29.1%					n/a	ceased operation		
2605 Cycle Hire running costs								n/a	ceased operation		
2700 New service support	2000	1357	67.9%		2000	107	5.3%	500		5000	renamed from "R/Café"
3151 Market expenditure	1300	1076	82.7%		1300	663	51.0%	750			
3436 Gages - equipment	1000	1416	141.6%		1500	765	51.0%	1000		1000	assumes unchanged
3460 Gages - food	12000	10211	85.1%		12500	4363	34.9%	10000		12000	assuming still 3x per wk
3636 Thursday Club running	1000	0	0.0%		1000	284	28.4%	750		1000	net of member contrib'n
4603 Youth development costs	2000	485	24.3%		2500	1327	53.1%	1750	net of grants rec'd	3500	net of grants
2436 Road safety <i>new: Environmental support</i>										1000	tf from Amenities
										5000	
TOTAL	33400	19286	57.7%		22000	7967	36.2%	15850		29700	

Preamble: The last complete year (2020-21) was anomalous due to the restrictions on normal activities caused by the pandemic. Unsurprisingly, income was reduced to 75% of forecast, though Gages maintained a strong performance. However, expenditure was correspondingly reduced, and the Committee returned a net surplus at the year end. The current year (2021-2022) has reflected the slow return to 'business as usual', but estimates based on the half-year suggest the budget will still end in a surplus over forecast.

Setting a budget for the coming year involves some significant unknowns, the principal one being whether Council will continue to support the development of community services, and therefore the extent to which budget provision should be made for it, either in general or in respect of particular projects. While the aim in principle is that community services should be self-funding, most projects will require some degree of initial investment or launch funding. There is also an issue as to whether climate change action will require financial provision, and in any event to what extent the Parish Council wishes to become involved. These are matters for the Committee – and ultimately for Full Council – to decide.

FOREST ROW VILLAGE MARKET

The market continues to go from strength to strength with the Christmas market being fully booked with 53 stalls confirmed and paid for. As you will see from the figures below we have had our best year since taking over as market manager despite the pandemic restrictions.

2016	£7,754.00
2017	£8,534.50
2018	£6,635.00
2019	£6,547.50
2020	£5,889.00
2021	£10,699.00
	£46,059.00

The refurbishment work on the old gazebos sadly has had to be put on hold as I am unable to do the work needed but as soon as I am able I will carry these out.

MEDICAL TRANSPORT

The drivers have covered 1649.8 miles this financial year and have taken £102 admin fees and £16.55 in donations.

The co-ordinators put a free advert in the latest Parish News requesting new volunteer drivers, I haven't had any requests for DBS checks yet but hope that they do have some positive response.

HEARING AID MAINTENANCE

We continue to maintain hearing aids and give out free replacement batteries from the office, it will be interesting to see if our service is affected following the opening of the new hearing centre on Hillside. As our service is free of charge I doubt that it will.

CAR CHARGING UNIT

Since the last meeting the charging unit has been replaced with a new BP Pulse double socket unit. I understand that Tony has had issues with the unit however we have not had any other reports from members of the public.

The BP

Community Services Report

October-December

353-Paying Subs for October and November

October

Sessions have been well attended and we have a steady flow of regular members attending.

Lots of planning around activities has taken place. We held 2 Halloween Themed sessions.

Year 5 and 6 had a Halloween party that was fancy dress themed and a prize for the best dressed. The youth voted on the winners for the competition. The youth thoroughly enjoyed the session. Youth workers organised games and activities.

12–16-year-olds had a Halloween themed session with music and cookery.

We have been cooking regularly with the older teens and are getting creative with low cost wholesome meal/snack options. The idea being that this will help with budgeting life skills and nutrition.

Some of our older youths have been attending on the younger sessions to support in the form of mentoring. We have seen some fantastic relationships being built and it is encouraging the older teens to take on more of an empowering role in terms of a "Sense of responsibility "for the Venue.

November

We opened our Wednesday session to year 5 on Wednesday 3rd November. We now have a mixed session weekly every Wednesday of year 5 and 6.

We will invite year 5 to join us on a Monday/Wednesday and Friday in the new year alongside the year 6 youth.

MM has had lots to organise around planning. Having received the funding from the Police for the Community Grant, MM has been busy trying to find a space to facilitate the intergenerational graffiti project.

We are aiming to run the project across 3 days at the end of December weather permitting. MM has full permission from Bob Farrar that owns the business unit to paint a mural in the wall opposite the scout hut. The design will be nature themed, and MM will work on promoting and recruiting volunteers to come along and get involved working alongside our youth.

MM to Update CS in next report.

December

MM has also set up an Open Evening at Venue to discuss some of the work we have been doing to tackle Drug and Alcohol concerns that we have had with our older teens.

MM has been working closely with Patricia Patterson to organise this.

We have invited some organisations that may be a support to parents and carers beyond the provision that the youth service provides to attend and share about the work that they do.

This is taking place on Wednesday 1st December at 7pm.

Lots of Christmas planning around activities and the Staff team will be supporting the Christmas trail. We are aiming to turn the Venue into a winter wonderland and are setting up a grotto for Santa to hand out the gifts on the day.

REPAIR CAFÉ REPORT FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES 7TH DECEMBER 2021

The October and November Repair Cafés have continued to be busy especially after introducing our new sharpening service. Please see below for further information.

October:

We had 51 completed repair sheets, with a total of 38 separate items on top of this for the new sharpening service.

We had a very impressive 70.59% success rate, took £230 for repairs but only £18 for the Café, which made me have a rethink on where the cafe waiting area should be sited. This led to looking at the whole set up for the November Café which seemed to work better.

November:

We had a total of 62 items brought in:

40 were successfully repaired, giving us a success rate of 64.52%.

We had 22 electricals

7 sewing

2 bikes

31 general items including 2 typewriters, 14 items for sharpening and 6 watches.

48% of our visitors were from Forest Row

18% East Grinstead

The remaining 33% from the surrounding villages.

We took a total of £385 in donations with £79 from the Café which I'm sure is down to the beautiful homemade cakes, thank you to everyone that gave up their time to bake.

Two of our electrical Repair volunteers were doing interviews and soundbites for an upcoming show on local Wildhart Radio, so that will be worth a listen.

We were unable to end the year with our usual volunteer lunch, but presents were given, and everyone thanked for volunteering their time.

Proposal to Council:

The next Repair Café is scheduled to run on January 15th, 2022, **I would like to ask that Council agree to it now being run as an independent service with immediate effect to assure continuity of the service to the community**, as discussed in previous meetings.

A committee has been formed and will take on the structure of a constituted group to allow us to get a bank account to align with practice elsewhere as part of the national Repair Cafe network. The committee will run as a not-for-profit group and try to look to support other local community groups if possible, in the future.

The committee believe it is important to keep an affiliation with the Parish Council going forward, as we know this is such a valued community service and one that would be a huge loss to Forest Row if it wasn't continued, so financial support on rent would be sought. If the Community Services Committee agrees to the Repair Café being run independently, a proposal will be sent to the next Finance and Policy meeting to agree terms for renting the rooms for 11 Saturday's a year. We will provide a break down of figures taken from the last 4 years to determine expected donations for how we will fund the Repair Café. At present we are starting with a balance of zero and have set up costs including buying card reader machines, advertising, and printing costs to find.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sara Smart
Repair Café Coordinator
27.11.21