

Forest Row Parish Council

Clerk:
Email:

Mr David O'Driscoll
parishclerk@forestrow.gov.uk

(Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 2pm)



To: All members of FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL:
Cllrs. Eichner (Chair), Christie, Cocks, Evans,
Gilbert, Hugo, Jaffay, La Djoï, T Lewin, Scott,
Summers, Volkers & A M Waters

Community Centre
Hartfield Road
Forest Row
East Sussex
RH18 5DZ

Tel: 01342 822661
Fax: 01342 825739
Email: info@forestrow.gov.uk
Website: www.forestrow.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,
Your attendance is required at an extraordinary meeting
of the FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL to be held on
TUESDAY 10th OCTOBER 2023 in the Garden Room at
the Community Centre at **7.30 PM**.

Date: 20th September 2023


Mr David O'Driscoll
Clerk to Forest Row Parish Council

THE FIRST FIFTEEN MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE FOR QUESTIONS AND REMARKS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ANY RELEVANT TOPIC. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO STAY AND ADD QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON THE AGENDA ITEMS, AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING

AGENDA

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. MINUTES & TRANSCRIPT OF THE MEETING OF 26th SEPTEMBER 2023: DEFER TO THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING
4. CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS: POSTPONE TO THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING
5. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS OR REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS FOR THIS AGENDA
6. APPROVE NEW KITCHEN EQUIPMENT EXPENDITURE
7. CONSIDER THE 2024-25 BUDGET
8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

FULL COUNCIL

BACKING PAPERS FOR EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING 10th OCTOBER 2023

	Description	Page nos
	Clerk's briefing note	1
6	Quote for new cooker & ancillaries	2-3
7	Pre-budget briefing note	4
	Areas of concern	5
	Committee printouts & schedule of reserves	6-9

<p style="text-align: center;">COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING TO THE EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON 10th OCTOBER 2023</p>
--

3 & 4. RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS / CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS

The main purpose of this EGM is to address urgent items 6 & 7. It is therefore proposed to defer items of ordinary business to the next Ordinary Meeting.

ACTION: to resolve accordingly

5. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS. Only needed if any Member has a personal *financial* interest in the main business of the meeting.

6. APPROVE NEW KITCHEN EQUIPMENT EXPENDITURE

The main cooker in the Community Centre kitchen has reached the end of its useful life, and it has been clear for some months that a replacement would be needed. Sandra Aylen sought quotes from reputable suppliers (including the company which supplied our present equipment), but the chosen supplier was by a margin the most competitive. However, some remedial work will also be needed to the extractor mechanism and gas control valves to meet new legislation, and this has unavoidably pushed up the original price. Council is asked to approve the estimate supplied, which will be apportioned between 'Gages' & Community Centre equipment budgets.

ACTION: to approve as appropriate

7. CONSIDER THE 2024-25 BUDGET

The Committees are due to meet over the next four weeks to agree draft budgets for 2024-25. Because a majority of councillors are new to the process, an opportunity is now offered for an all-Member discussion of the goals and process involved, and establish common ground on the general direction of the budget (without at this point having to make itemised decisions). A detailed briefing note and supporting printouts are attached.

ACTION: to decide on as appropriate

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

As per usual



The Catering Equipment Supply Co. Ltd

Suppliers of Commercial Catering Equipment,
Refrigeration, Extraction Systems and Bespoke
Fabrication

Established Since 1995

135 Margate Road
Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 7AB

Tel: 01227 742999
Mobile: 07768 200424
Email: cescoltd@aol.com
or cescoltd1@gmail.com
www.cescolimited.co.uk
Company No. 3109662
VAT No. 661 8291 21

Our Ref: HC-23-271Q1

27th September 2023

Forest Row Parish Council

Community Centre,
Hartfield Road,
Forest Row,
RH18 5DZ

FAO Sandra Sameiro – Communications Officer

Dear Sandra

ESTIMATE – Extraction & Range
RE: Forest Row Parish Council, RH18 5DZ

Further to our site survey we are pleased to submit our estimate as follows:

Item	Qty	Description	Price
01	1	'CESCO' to manufacture, supply and install a stainless-steel extract canopy with a condense/drain channel to the front and sides complete with a rear plenum chamber housing reusable/washable stainless steel baffle grease filters. Includes removal of the old extract canopy from site and disposal at a metal recycling centre. 1400mm wide x 1200mm deep x 480mm high.	£ 1612.50
02	1	'CESCO' to manufacture, supply and install new ducting to replace the existing flexi ducting within the system which no longer meets the standards for commercial kitchen extraction. Ducting will connect to the existing spigot within the roof void and to the existing fan.	£ 819.99
03	1	'CESCO' Gas interlocking system comprising of a Merlin CT1250 gas interlocking control box complete with an emergency stop button located at the exit from the kitchen. Gas interlocking system to utilise a fan power sensor connected to the extraction fan. Includes a solenoid valve up to 28mm. All wiring to be undertaken by our qualified and experienced electrician.	£ 985.00

CESCO Ltd Estimate

Item	Qty	Description	Price
04	1	Lincat SLR9C/N six burner oven range. 6 x 4.5kW burners, fully pressed hob, cast iron pan supports, low-flue, FFD's, 8.5kW oven, 2 shelves, 4 shelf positions, range mounted on castors. 900mm wide x 600mm deep x 956mm high.	£ 1470.00
04a	1	Commercial gas hose for item 04.	£ 75.00
05	1	'CESCO' to disconnect the existing oven and remove from site for disposal at a metal recycling centre and install the new range cooker. Undertake gas safety tests on the new appliance and certify the installation with a gas safety certificate.	£ 234.00
Sub Total			£ 5196.49
Excl. 20% VAT			

We very much hope that this all meets with your approval and look forward to receiving your further instructions.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me. Assuring you of our prompt and personal attention at all times.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Coleman

Managing Director

For and on behalf of 'CESCO',

The Catering Equipment Supply Co. Ltd.



Federation of Small Businesses

The UK's Leading Business Organisation

ALL PRICES EXCLUDE VAT AT THE CURRENT RATE

The Catering equipment Supply Co Ltd trading as 'CESCO' TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF TRADING

1. **VALIDITY.** We endeavour to hold our prices for as long as possible, however we can only guarantee this estimate for 7 days. Costs in this estimate may be subject to change if only certain elements are ordered due to package price discounts.
2. **SERVICES.** The provision of electrical, gas, water and waste supplies are not included.
3. **EXCLUSIONS.** Anything not specifically mentioned is excluded.
4. **INSTALLATION & ACCESS.** For installations we assume a clear, level, ground floor site with unrestricted access for immediate start. Any delays outside of our control are chargeable. All wasted days are non-refundable. Return visits are chargeable. All floors, walls and ceilings in the kitchen area will be finished completely and all electrical, gas and water services are to be in and capable of being made live prior to commencement of our installation programme.
Additional costs will be incurred if our engineers are unable to test and commission equipment at the time of the installation. Our engineers will require uninterrupted access to the servery area between the hours of 08.00 and 17.00 hours Monday to Friday, if working hours are restricted extra expenses may be incurred.

Services run by others are to be terminated with appropriate stopcocks/valves, isolators, gas cocks etc., and suitable tolerances are to be left to enable the fitting of waste traps, bends, elbows, etc. Wastes

BUDGET 2024-25: PRE-BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

I sent round an initial briefing on the budget on 5th September, and a follow-up on 22nd September. The response to both was limited. But I thought on reflection that this was not the ideal approach, and presumed more knowledge of the Council's finances than could reasonably have been acquired in five months. It also sat slightly awkwardly with the policy of triaging new proposals through a working group before referring to committee.

The purpose of this meeting is therefore to look at the budget from the other end, so to speak, and ask the question: what is the Council's financial requirement for the coming year? Or put another way, what is an acceptable increase in the precept for the Council to achieve its objectives? Some services generate an income, which accounts for about 20% of our funding, and you could certainly think in terms of increasing hire charges and service fees, subject to what people's pockets will stand. There are also other sources of funding – grants, crowdfunding and public works borrowing – but the first two are unpredictable and the third is only for major capital projects. The precept provides our core funding and, at local level, is still not artificially capped by central government.

This year's precept was £446,000 (a reduction from the £456,000 which I originally requested). We will break even by the year end, hopefully without drawing on reserves, but there will be no surplus, and if a national staff pay award is agreed late in the year it may be tight. Our total reserves, general and nominated, are £316,533. The general reserve of £195,000 is our back-up fund and needs to be maintained against unforeseen contingencies, although the nominated reserves can be altered and drawn on if circumstances change.

Our current tax base (ie the number of household units liable for council tax) is about 2,245, and unlikely to change much. This means that for every 1% increase over last year's precept (£4,460), the additional cost per taxable unit will be approximately £2. If we were to raise the precept from £446K to £500K for next year (a hike of 12.1%) the net cost to the taxpayer would be an additional £24.05 per year, which is slightly less than 50p per week. Raise the net cost to the taxpayer by £1 per week or ±£50 per year, and you get a precept of £558K.

[Please note that it is always better to talk about the money value of increases rather than ambiguous percentages. In a Forest Row Band D council tax bill, each 1% increase on the precept adds just under £2, but a 1% increase of the County Council's share of the bill is more than £14].

As I said in the follow-up note, you never get a second chance to make a first impression, so if you do plan to be a 'spending council' investing in the community, you need to take the initiative on this next budget round. But on the other hand, you need to justify the increased expenditure, not penny for penny, but in broadly targeted terms.

I therefore attach to this briefing note a printout for each of the Committees, showing the figures for each item/cost code for the last completed year, and the current half year, with a prediction for the current year end. I also attach a copy of the current reserves allocation.

Some items will not change much, except perhaps for an inflation uprate, but I reproduce below the lists from my 22nd September note to show what areas might be looking for enhanced funding. Please read them through again and give them some thought – plus anything I have overlooked. Then please come to the meeting armed with some idea of where you see our financial needs for next year and what the precept should look like.

DOD - 03/10/2023

BUDGET 2024-25: POTENTIAL AREAS OF CONCERN (by Committee)

- *Facilities* needs to think about:
 - 'Hard assets'. How much does it want to invest in generating additional income from/ refurbishing/ improving the Community Centre? Should we be making more of the VENUE? Do we *need* more benches/ bus shelters? Are we committed to the streetlight upgrade? Does the play equipment need an (accessible) upgrade now? An extra hoop/goal for the VENUE games area?
 - In the longer run, does FRPC want to acquire more buildings – old Co-op, Rydens?
 - 'Green assets'. A decision about the cemetery (and its funding). Do we want to use the Gleeson land, and if so what for and how much? Do we want to initiate a community compost project? Any appetite for a renewed community orchard / growing space? How much do we care about Gilham Bank? How much importance are we allocating to outdoor maintenance (crossover with F&P re staffing levels)? Do we want wildflower spaces? Could we 'stage' the Foresters Green mound?
 - Critically, litter and pavement cleaning come up several times: is it worth pursuing a joint venture/ devolution of service with Wealden to improve this? Similarly, some sort of joint venture for waste/ recyclables?
- *Community Services* has the following to consider:
 - The suggestion of a 'hub', information/gathering/performance space/structure
 - Is the shed project still live?
 - Emergency planning/ provision -who for, how resourced, cost?
 - Increased youth provision – forum & interaction with Council – details, costs?
 - Viability of food recycling for power generation, other community power initiatives?
 - Road safety – how far to take this and how much to spend?
 - Environmental support – how far to involve the Council and how much to spend?
 - Revival of car club?
 - Expansion of services to seniors/ vulnerable/ hard-to-reach?
 - Social prescribing?
- *Finance & Policy* needs to consider:
 - Staffing – in particular whether a part-time warden is to be recruited, maintenance crew levels (to include street cleaning), caretaking.
 - Council rebranding/restructuring - budget implications
 - Affordable housing – a longer term project
 - A Parish/Neighbourhood Plan -is there scope/ desire/ funding for a plan?
 - Involvement & communication with community: ways and means – budget implications to include broadcasting of meetings)?
 - Is there space/ desire for a village-based finance system?
 - The potential opportunities for & cost of networking with other organisations

BUDGET PREP FACILITIES

	2022-23			2023-24			commentary
	budget	actual	percent	budget	to 6m	percent	
Income streams:							
Allotment rents	1675	2887	172	1750	908	52	2000
Village green hires	750	324	43	750	648	86	750
Village green utilities	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burial fees	15000	16921	113	13000	3079	24	12000
Grants/misc (amenities)	0	2700	0	1500	0	0	1000
CC-hirings	15000	21143	141	15000	9074	61	18000
CC-equipt hire	750	509	68	400	176	44	400
CC-rents	22000	23879	109	22000	10547	48	22000
Misc (books/copies)	400	398	100	400	150	38	400
CC-drinks machine	500	635	127	500	321	64	600
Misc - property refunds	0	370	0	0	3083	0	3100
Grants/misc (property	0	683	0	0	100	0	100
VotG income	4000	3345	84	4000	980	25	2000
TOTAL INCOME	60175	73794	127	42300	24431	58	46600

Expend streams							
Allotment upkeep	1000	458	46	700	386	55	700
VG utilities	250	29	12	100	263	263	400
Outdoor m'tce	5000	9939	199	8000	3743	46	8000
Outdoor planting	1000	979	98	1000	634	63	750
Outdoor equipment	2500	4094	164	1705	75	4	1000
Play & skate areas	1000	2771	278	1500	3134	209	4000
Dog bins	3100	3276	106	3200	1494	47	3200
Cemetery admin	300	556	185	330	256	78	330
Cemetery rates	700	1090	156	1210	1100	91	1100
Streetslights-power	4000	5213	130	6600	2646	40	6600
Streetslights- mtce	7500	6238	83	8250	3284	40	10000
Environmental support	3500	0	0	0	0	0	0

CC - rates & services	20000	33739	169	33000	24280	74	50000
CC - upkeep/cleaning	12000	4852	40	13200	4257	32	12000
CC - drinks machine	500	1090	218	770	525	68	1000
CC - enhancement	3250	4333	133	0	0	0	0
VotG non youth equip	500	224	45	500	0	0	0
VotG running costs	9500	2132	22	4000	2227	56	3000
Bus shelters	0	0	0	0	105	0	105
Offsite car park	0	0	0	0	150	0	150
Notice boards	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	75600	81013	107	84065	48568	58	102335

126%

BUDGET PREP COMM SERV

	2022-23 Budget	Actual	% forecast	2023-24 Budget	To month 6	% to date	f'cast 12 mth
Income streams							
Medical transport	300	182	61	300	131	44.0%	150
Market income	9000	4461	49.0%	9000	3533	39.0%	7500
Service devpt income	0	0	0.0%	2000	0	0.0%	500
Gages sales	20000	23058	115.0%	20000	11036	55.0%	20000
Thursday club subs	400	948	237.0%	400	117	29.0%	200
Youth income	2500	2226	89.0%	2500	818	33.0%	2000
Misc income	0	0	0.0%	0	27	0.0%	0
TOTAL	32200	30875	96.0%	34200	15662	46.0%	30350
Expenditure							
Medical transport	200	23	12.0%	200	0	0.0%	50
Wealdlink	1000	928	93.0%	1000	255	26.0%	1020
Market expenses	1300	2625	202.0%	1430	3786	265.0%	7500
Service development (2700)	3000	0	0.0%	4000	0	0.0%	1000
Gages food	12000	16827	140.0%	13200	9119	69.0%	17000
Gages equipment	1000	3742	374.0%	2200	792	36.0%	3000
Thursday Club running	1000	1493	149.0%	1100	163	15%	500
Youth development	3500	3109	89.0%	3500	1015	29.0%	3000
Road safety	750	0	0.0%	750	0	0.0%	750
Enviro/emergcny	0	0	0.0%	6000	0	0.0%	1000
TOTAL	23750	28747		33380	15130	45.0%	34820
							104%

2024-2025

BUDGET PREP FINANCE & P

Income streams	2022-23		% of forecast
	Budget	Actual	
Misc income	0	19464	0
Wayleaves	5	6	100.0%
Devolved services	1450	1838	127.0%
Community warden hire	11000	6056	55.0%
interest received	55	3272	5945.0%
TOTAL	12510	30636	244.0%
Expenditure budgets			
Pension-top-up	6000	5940	99.00%
Salaries	345000	371085	108%
Payroll outsource	420	525	125%
Contribution library salary	3285	4379	133%
Staff training/travel	3000	759	25%
Warden expenses	500	630	126%
Forest rate	25	31	124%
Postage	500	424	85%
Telecoms	7500	6345	85%
Stationery	800	951	119%
Subscriptions	6000	5583	93%
Insurance	8000	9753	122%
Photocopier	3500	5467	156%
Chairmans Fund	680	0	0%
Parish meeting	500	0	0%
Councillors training/travel	1000	274	27%
H & S / DBS	150	0	0%
Members allowances	6000	1263	21%
Bank charges	2000	1887	94%
Legal/professional fees	5000	2470	49%
Audit & financial management	3500	2977	85%
Van lease	3000	737	25%
Office equipment	300	857	286%
Office maintenance	700	473	68%
Election fund	1000	665	66%
Wayleaves	25	1	5%
Community event	500	499	100%
Advertising	0	33	0%
Website	650	500	77%
Newsletter	500	0	0%
Grants made	7000	16328	233%
FRGSA subsidy	2500	2500	100%
TOTAL	419535	443336	106%

2023-24	2023-24		% to date f'cast 12 mth
	Budget	to mth 6	
	0	38	100
	5	4	89
	1450	368	25
	10000	0	0
	1500	3225	215
	12955	3635	4554
	4000	0	0
	365000	186081	51
	420	193	46
	4000	0	0
	1000	50	5
	500	320	64
	25	31	122
	500	0	0
	7700	2586	34
	600	186	31
	6600	3066	46
	10000	10528	105
	4000	2003	50
	500	0	0
	50	0	0
	500	475	95
	150	71	48
	6000	484	8
	1800	635	35
	3500	80	2.3
	3300	1034	31
	300	0	0
	500	0	0
	0	0	0
	4000	0	0
	25	1	6
	500	134	27
	50	33	65
	750	720	96
	500	0	0
	7000	650	9
	2500	0	0
	436270	209361	48
			414630
			95%

2024-25

FRPC RESERVES FOR
2022-23/2023-24

	Actual 2022-23	Projected 2023-24	Actual 23-24 v.1	Actual 23-24 v.2
General	199476	180000	196449	194949
Nominated				
Playground	30000	40000	30000	32500
Highway match	2000	2000	2000	2000
By-elections	1000	1000	1000	1000
Cemetery land	30000	35000	30000	30000
CC refurb	30500	32000	30500	31000
Devolved services	5000	5000	5000	5000
PWLB loan	11500	11500	11500	10000
CIL	10084	10084	10084	10084
TOTAL	319560	316584	316533	316533