

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 FACILITIES COMMITTEE:
Cllrs. Hugo (Chair), Cocks, Gilbert, Rainbow,
Scott, Summers, Taylor-Smith & AM Waters

Community Centre
Hartfield Road
Forest Row
East Sussex
RH18 5DZ

Your attendance is required at a meeting of the
FACILITIES COMMITTEE to be held on
TUESDAY 16th JANUARY 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Garden Room of the Community Centre

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

Date: 10 January, 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D O'Driscoll'.

D O'Driscoll Parish Clerk

A G E N D A

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - 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 FACILITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 7TH NOVEMBER 2023
5. TO NOTE CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION
 - 5.1. Community Centre refurbishment
 - 5.2. Public library lease renewal
 - 5.3. Crittall windows
 - 5.4. Cemetery land research
 - 5.5. Rush Green culvert & skatepark drain
 - 5.6. Street cleaning project
 - 5.7. Fly tipping incident
6. BUILDINGS & STREET ASSETS : DISCUSSION/DECISIONS
 - 6.1 Bus shelter repair
 - 6.2 Fingerpost repairs/removals
 - 6.3 Additional CCTV
 - 6.4 Deceased memorials
7. OPEN SPACE ASSETS & MAINTENANCE: DISCUSSION/DECISIONS
 - 7.1 Allotment manager & Burials Clerk reports
 - 7.2 Gleeson land proposal
 - 7.3 Tree works
8. FINANCIAL ISSUES
 - 8.1 Financial report to date
 - 8.2 Budget priorities for the next year
 - 8.3 Maintenance staffing
9. TO NOTE ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL

**COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING TO THE MEETING OF THE FACILITIES COMMITTEE
DATED 16th JANUARY 2024**

1-4. FORMAL ITEMS. As per usual.

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

5.1 Community Centre refurbishment We currently have two lists of items requiring attention, with some matters already completed and some overlaps between the lists. I am in the process of inspecting the building with Don Isted to create an up-to-date single list. Also suggesting which items can be tackled in-house and which may require a contractor.

5.2 Public library lease renewal. I am currently drafting the renewed lease. ESCC have asked for a revised plan of the library rooms. I am hoping one of the Members can supply this.

5.3 Crittall windows. The first stage recommended by the heritage consultant was a full repair of the existing windows (including glass panes). I am obtaining three quotes.

5.4 Cemetery land research I have a pre-application appointment regarding an alternative/ supplementary site booked for Monday 15th January and will report to the meeting.

5.5 Rush Green culvert & skatepark drain. I am still awaiting a reply from the blacksmith.

5.6 Street cleaning project. This is still under discussion with Wealden DC, and Cllr Patterson-Vanegas is also making direct efforts on our behalf. It is unlikely that we will conclude an agreement until the next financial year.

5.7 Fly-tipping incident. A vehicle load of assorted rubbish was dumped in the Weirwood car park around the 15th December. It was reported to Wealden, but they declined to remove it as the car park was in our ownership. To prevent any additional dumping and obstruction of the public access, I took urgent action to have the waste removed by a licensed contractor. He found an address on some of the material, and I am now chasing this up for the costs.

ACTION: to note

6. BUILDINGS & STREET ASSETS: DISCUSSION/ DECISIONS

6.1 Bus shelter repairs. Cllr Hugo will report on the ongoing repair to the Foresters' Green website. Committee may wish to consider if any other street furniture is in need of repair or replacement.

ACTION: to resolve accordingly

6.2 Fingerposts. The council is responsible for a number of fingerposts around the village, None are in great shape. The post at the junction of Hartfield Road & Hillside has been identified as in very poor condition. Does Committee want to spend money on repair or removal?

ACTION: to resolve accordingly

6.3 Additional CCTV. We have had a request to consider additional CCTV cameras, specifically along the pathway at Newlands Place (which is council land), to deter vandalism and theft. It would probably have to be free-standing from the present wired system. There has also been an enquiry about installing CCTV more widely in the village centre, although this would necessarily be in partnership with the principal councils and the police. Does Committee want to pursue this idea further?

ACTION: to resolve as appropriate

6.4 Memorials for the deceased:

Firstly, for Fred Bishop. Deferred from previously. For Committee to discuss and decide. Secondly, for the late Queen. No firm decision has yet been made. One is now needed.

ACTION: to resolve as appropriate

7. OPEN SPACE ASSETS & MAINTENANCE: DISCUSSION/DECISIONS

7.1 Allotment Manager & Burials Clerk reports. Report are to follow.

7.2 Gleeson land proposal. The previous discussion on the Gleeson land was inconclusive. Although it may once have been seen as an open play area for children, the reality is that it is now overgrown fallow ground with no current use. A firm proposal has been submitted for a practical use (attached). For Committee to discuss and resolve.

ACTION: to resolve as appropriate

7.3 Tree works. I am concerned about the overall health of the Council-owned trees. Our maintenance staff keep a watching brief on trees where they are working, we also get reports from our lay tree warden (Miss V Hill), and from members of the public. However, the comprehensive survey supplied by our professional tree warden is now several years old and some of the 'minor works' identified then may by now have increased in risk. Does Committee wish to instruct the tree warden to update his survey and then proceed to action on any significant risks identified?

ACTION: to resolve as appropriate

8. FINANCIAL ISSUES

8.1 Financial report to date. A current printout is attached. As noted at the recent Full Council, the combined figure from the two original committees shows income at 79.6% of forecast and expenditure at 94.8%. The income from the property side (91.9%) is still subsidising the amenities side (49.0%). The overall high percentage of expenditure reflects the fact that major outgoings such as rates are now complete for the year. However, this does not cancel out one or two anomalies, significant items being the high figure on streetlights, 208% of forecast to date, and the poor performance of burial income at 38%.

ACTION: to note

8.2 Budget priorities for the next year: Facilities has benefitted particularly from the higher precept figure, but has also increased its income forecast by way of higher room hire & cemetery fees, giving an overall increase of approx. £25,000, or 49% over 2023-24. However, budgeted expenditure has increased from £84,065 to £161,750, or 92% over 2023-24, so care will be needed to keep within forecast.

Allowance for outdoor maintenance has more than doubled, and an extra code has been added for pavement /street cleaning, all of which are intended to address the 'state of the village'. The redundant code for Community Centre 'enhancement' has also been restored at £5,000 to reflect the importance of maintaining the building in good heart.

ACTION: to note and discuss as necessary

8.3 Maintenance staffing. Staffing matters are overall the remit of Finance & Policy, nevertheless Facilities may wish to give an indication of its view on the staffing levels. The crew are currently dealing with all jobs on a nominal complement of 62 man/hours per wk.

10. TO NOTE ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL

Project Proposal by We Grow – Gleeson Land

Background of We Grow CIC

We Grow is a Community Interest Company (CIC), rooted in grassroots community development ethics, connecting people who want to grow their own food together with other people in their local area. Group sizes vary from 3-25 members (a membership can be an individual, a couple, or a family).

Since 2020, We Grow has helped 22 food co-ops to get growing together in Forest Row and surrounding villages, forming a wider community network where the growing groups meet regularly to swap seeds, seedlings, tools, knowledge and ideas.

Benefits of a food co-operative

The benefits of growing food together include improved physical and mental health from spending more time outside and with other people, better nature connection, zero food miles and no food packaging, reducing food bills, living a more sustainable lifestyle, less dependency on supermarkets and easier growing in terms of sharing watering and weeding responsibilities in a group. The network of groups meeting regularly to swap offers a closed loop system, as groups can trade seeds and produce and share their own compost, with no need to purchase these from anywhere, which increases self-reliance.

We Grow now

We Grow has recently been awarded funding to train more people to start up networks of food co-ops in different areas – this team of 6 are currently setting up networks in Lewes, Crowborough, Uckfield and a second tranche in Forest Row. If the networks are successful, more can be started in other areas around Sussex.

The Gleeson land vision

We Grow applied to use the Gleeson land for a food co-op a few years ago (at the time the initiative was called Tiny Farms). The Parish Council at the time gave a firm 'no', saying they couldn't understand why a group would grow food together, rather than individually.

Our vision for the Gleeson land is for a group of local people to grow either vegetables to take home a vegbox each or medicinal herbs, to be made into tinctures and balms for their families.

We Grow usually does the work of connecting people and then supporting them to organise themselves in the initial stages of their co-op; we do not have a set of rules or ways of working for groups to follow, as that is their journey to work out together and each co-op ultimately ends up working in their own way. We do have a set of

suggested ways of working, which have tended to work for other groups which we offer to new groups as a guide. Our involvement is only for the first few months; after that, the group takes full responsibility for their space and their way of working. In this vein, We Grow would be an introductory organisation; the agreement between the council and the group would not include We Grow; we would mentor and support initially only.

If there is funding available, the group would benefit from £200 as a start-up, to fund deer fencing and compost. The rest of the funds would be generated by the group pooling their contributions monthly. The ground would need to be cleared and made good to grow on (possibly by the grounds staff at the Parish Council).

Concerns and mitigations

The founder of We Grow, Andi Jaffay, is also part of the Parish Council. This could be seen as a potential conflict of interest; we would mitigate this by assuring the Facilities Committee that Andi trains and mentors the new team of people working with We Grow, and would not be personally involved in the bringing together of the group. The team member who is working in the Forest Row area is Arabella Harding, and she would be the person who would work with the group.

There have been concerns raised by local residents around wildlife at the Gleeson land – we would be mindful of this and Arabella would work with the group to identify areas that should be left alone for wildlife when the ground is due to be cleared. There have also been concerns raised around car parking if a group were to use the Gleeson land. We would be mindful of this when recruiting the group members, hopefully being able to recruit people who are very local to the site and who could walk or cycle.

There are 3 co-ops set up by We Grow already on the allotment site, which are thriving with groups growing together.

For more information on We Grow and local food co-ops, please visit:

Instagram [@wegrow.cic](#)

Facebook [We Grow](#)

Email wegrowcic@proton.me

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 10/01/2024

Month No: 10

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>Amenities & Services</u>							
<u>101 Allotments</u>							
1180 Allotment Rents	2,418	1,750	(668)			138.2%	
Allotments :- Income	<u>2,418</u>	<u>1,750</u>	<u>(668)</u>			<u>138.2%</u>	<u>0</u>
1135 Allotments-Water & Upkeep	436	700	264		264	62.3%	
Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>436</u>	<u>700</u>	<u>264</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>264</u>	<u>62.3%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>1,982</u>	<u>1,050</u>	<u>(932)</u>				
<u>102 Village Greens</u>							
1280 VG-Hire Income	748	750	2			99.7%	
4180 Misc Income	285	0	(285)			0.0%	
Village Greens :- Income	<u>1,033</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>(283)</u>			<u>137.7%</u>	<u>0</u>
1236 Outdoor Maintenance	5,223	8,000	2,777		2,777	65.3%	
1237 Outdoor Planting	634	1,000	366		366	63.4%	
1239 VG-Utilities	263	100	(163)		(163)	263.3%	
Village Greens :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>6,121</u>	<u>9,100</u>	<u>2,979</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,979</u>	<u>67.3%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(5,088)</u>	<u>(8,350)</u>	<u>(3,262)</u>				
<u>104 Amenities General</u>							
1400 Amenities grants/donations	0	1,500	1,500			0.0%	
Amenities General :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,500</u>			<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
1436 Skate & Play areas	3,134	1,500	(1,634)		(1,634)	208.9%	
1447 Dog Fouling	2,319	3,200	881		881	72.5%	
Amenities General :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>5,453</u>	<u>4,700</u>	<u>(753)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(753)</u>	<u>116.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(5,453)</u>	<u>(3,200)</u>	<u>2,253</u>				
<u>105 Outdoor Maintenance</u>							
1501 Outdoor Maintenance Equipment	577	1,705	1,128		1,128	33.9%	
Outdoor Maintenance :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>577</u>	<u>1,705</u>	<u>1,128</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,128</u>	<u>33.9%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(577)</u>	<u>(1,705)</u>	<u>(1,128)</u>				
<u>203 Street Lighting</u>							
2314 SL-Power	4,152	6,600	2,448		2,448	62.9%	
2336 Streetlights	17,166	8,250	(8,916)		(8,916)	208.1%	
Street Lighting :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>21,317</u>	<u>14,850</u>	<u>(6,467)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(6,467)</u>	<u>143.6%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(21,317)</u>	<u>(14,850)</u>	<u>6,467</u>				

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 10/01/2024

Month No: 10

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
204 Road Safety							
2436 RS-Road Safety	0	750	750		750	0.0%	
Road Safety :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>(750)</u>	<u>(750)</u>				
601 Cemetery							
6180 BU-Burial Fees	4,886	13,000	8,114			37.6%	
Cemetery :- Income	<u>4,886</u>	<u>13,000</u>	<u>8,114</u>			<u>37.6%</u>	<u>0</u>
6123 Cemetery Admin	256	330	74		74	77.6%	
6151 BU- Cemetery Rates	1,134	1,210	76		76	93.7%	
Cemetery :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>1,390</u>	<u>1,540</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>90.2%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>3,497</u>	<u>11,460</u>	<u>7,963</u>				
Amenities & Services :- Income	<u>8,338</u>	<u>17,000</u>	<u>8,662</u>			<u>49.0%</u>	
Expenditure	<u>35,294</u>	<u>33,345</u>	<u>(1,949)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,949)</u>	<u>105.8%</u>	
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(26,957)</u>						
Property & Assets							
201 Bus Shelters							
2136 BS-Bus Shelters	105	0	(105)		(105)	0.0%	
Bus Shelters :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>105</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(105)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(105)</u>		<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(105)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>105</u>				
205 Miscellaneous Assets							
2551 Offsite Car Parks	225	0	(225)		(225)	0.0%	
7108 PR-Notice Boards	31	0	(31)		(31)	0.0%	
Miscellaneous Assets :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>256</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(256)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(256)</u>		<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(256)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>256</u>				
301 Community Centre							
3180 CC-Lettings	17,142	15,000	(2,142)			114.3%	
3181 CC-Equipment Hire	320	400	80			80.1%	
3182 CC-Rents	15,945	22,000	6,055			72.5%	
3185 MISC - incl books/copying)	303	400	97			75.7%	
3187 CC Drinks Machine Income	440	500	60			88.0%	

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 10/01/2024

Month No: 10

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
3189 Misc Property Refunds	3,083	0	(3,083)			0.0%	
4180 Misc Income	100	0	(100)			0.0%	
Community Centre :- Income	<u>37,333</u>	<u>38,300</u>	<u>967</u>			<u>97.5%</u>	<u>0</u>
3111 CC-Rates & Services	34,521	33,000	(1,521)		(1,521)	104.6%	
3116 CC-Upkeep/Cleaning	7,150	13,200	6,050		6,050	54.2%	
3127 CC - Drinks Machine	861	770	(91)		(91)	111.9%	
Community Centre :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>42,532</u>	<u>46,970</u>	<u>4,438</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,438</u>	<u>90.6%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(5,199)</u>	<u>(8,670)</u>	<u>(3,471)</u>				
303 Venue on the Green							
3306 VOTG Income	1,543	4,000	2,457			38.6%	
Venue on the Green :- Income	<u>1,543</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>2,457</u>			<u>38.6%</u>	<u>0</u>
3304 Votg Non Youth Equip	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
3305 VOTG Running Costs	2,227	4,000	1,773		1,773	55.7%	
Venue on the Green :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>2,227</u>	<u>4,500</u>	<u>2,273</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,273</u>	<u>49.5%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(684)</u>	<u>(500)</u>	<u>184</u>				
Property & Assets :- Income	<u>38,876</u>	<u>42,300</u>	<u>3,424</u>			<u>91.9%</u>	
Expenditure	<u>45,120</u>	<u>51,470</u>	<u>6,350</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6,350</u>	<u>87.7%</u>	
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(6,244)</u>						
Grand Totals:- Income	<u>47,214</u>	<u>59,300</u>	<u>12,086</u>			<u>79.6%</u>	
Expenditure	<u>80,414</u>	<u>84,815</u>	<u>4,401</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,401</u>	<u>94.8%</u>	
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(33,200)</u>	<u>(25,515)</u>	<u>7,685</u>				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(33,200)</u>						