

# Forest Row Parish Council

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



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

To: All members of FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL:  
Cllrs. Josephson (Chairman), Davies, Hill, R Lewin,  
T Lewin, McNally, Miller, Moore, Pritchitt,  
Spackman, Summers, Waters, Williams, Withers  
and Wogan

Community Centre  
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Dear Sir/Madam,

Your attendance is required at a meeting of the  
FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL to be held on  
**TUESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022** in the Garden Room at  
the Community Centre at **7.30 PM**.

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022

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
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETING
  - 3.1 To approve the minutes of the Meetings of Council held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021
  - 3.2 To consider any objections to deletion of the digital transcript of that meeting
4. CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM THE LAST ORDINARY MEETING
5. TO NOTE AND APPROVE LIST OF DELEGATED DECISIONS
6. TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW
7. CHAIRMANS COMMENTS
8. TO NOTE CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION:
  - 8.1 Clerk's absence
  - 8.2 Pending Leases
  - 8.3 Forest Row Festival
  - 8.4 Working Groups
9. SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT
10. PRINCIPAL COUNCILS
11. STANDING COMMITTEES
12. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES (IF ANY)
13. COMMUNITY WARDEN
14. TO APPROVE THE REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2022-2023 & TO SET THE PRECEPT
15. TO CONSIDER & RESOLVE ON THE COUNCIL'S POSITION WITH RESPECT TO THE FUTURE OF THE FORMER HWRS

16. TO CONSIDER & RESOLVE ON THE COUNCIL'S INVOLVEMENT IN HM THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS
17. TO RESOLVE ON THE ISSUE OF AN ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR 2022
18. NOTICES, CONSULTATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)
19. TO NOTE ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE.

**FULL COUNCIL**

**BACKING PAPERS FOR MEETING 18<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022**

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**COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING FOR THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL  
ON 18<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022**

1. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS** None signified in advance
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** None signified in advance
3. **RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETING**  
There is one meeting to be covered: the ordinary meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021. Records of the extraordinary meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> January will be deferred to a future meeting
4. **CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING**  
*ACTION: to discharge as appropriate*
5. **TO NOTE & APPROVE LIST OF DELEGATED DECISIONS:** (as attached to backing papers)  
*ACTION: to note*
6. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/ REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION** Members who have a financial interest in any of the items covered by this agenda may wish to declare a personal interest. However, occasional users of services or volunteers need not be concerned.  
*ACTION: to note*

**TO NOTE REPORTS**

7. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**
8. **TO NOTE CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION**
  - 8.1 Clerk's absence. As Members know, I had an accident on 2<sup>nd</sup> November requiring surgery, and Carolyn Coomber has been supplying in my absence. My medical certificate became a 'part fit note' on 10<sup>th</sup> December, allowing a phased return to work. I am now effectively back in harness, although full mobility remains a distant goal. Following Government guidance, I am largely working from home, but will be attending the office when circumstances require, as also face-to-face meetings of Council and the Committees.
  - 8.2 Pending leases. Terms were settled with the occupiers of 'The Cube' in October, and I am just awaiting return of the formal lease document duly signed. The sports ground lease took a back seat during the recycling site negotiations, but I now have a named contact officer, plus assistance from our County Councillor, so will be pressing the issue vigorously.
  - 8.3 Forest Row Festival. We received an email from the Festival Committee in mid-December, stating that the new provisional dates of 24-26 June had been chosen for the 2022 Festival. We have not as yet received any further details, requests or proposals.
  - 8.4 Working groups. The committee review working group ('COMSTRUCT') met on 25<sup>th</sup> October for some preliminary ground-clearing. Further work has regrettably been held up by my absence, but another meeting will be called in the next couple of weeks. The Emergency Plan working group set up by Council on 21<sup>st</sup> September has yet to meet, although we have had an approach since from the County Council Emergency Arrangements Officer.

**9. SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT**

A summary printout to month 10 is attached. Individual Chairmen may report on their own Committees, but the overall picture (with capital transactions removed) is positive, being 100% of forecast income and approximately 73% of forecast expenditure. As noted elsewhere, the reserves position will not be clear until the year end.

**10. PRINCIPAL COUNCILS**

County & District Councillors have been invited and may report orally

**11. STANDING COMMITTEES**

Chairmen of Committees have been invited to give a brief report.

**12. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Representatives may report on any items of relevance.

**13. COMMUNITY WARDEN**

Report to follow

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION / DECISION**

**14. TO APPROVE THE REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2022-2023 & TO SET THE PRECEPT**

Members are referred to the consolidated draft budget and guidance note supplied for the extra-ordinary meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> January. This briefing note is being compiled before that meeting, but if any amendments to the revenue budget were adopted at that meeting, they will have been incorporated into a revised final draft supplied with these papers.

The precept resolution follows on from the previous. I would respectfully point out that if a Member has voted in favour of the budget figure, they must then vote for the corresponding precept which supports it. There have in previous years been occasional anomalies where Members have voted in favour of the budget but against the corresponding precept.

***ACTION: to resolve accordingly***

**15. TO CONSIDER AND RESOLVE ON THE COUNCIL'S POSITION WITH RESPECT TO THE FUTURE OF THE FORMER HWRS**

On 14<sup>th</sup> December East Sussex rejected the Council's bid to purchase the freehold of the former HWRS as a Community Asset Transfer and opted instead to sell the site to a commercial bidder, together with ownership of the non-highway Station Road.

Ostensibly, this is the final stage in the campaign by the Parish Council to restart the recycling operation in Forest Row which was closed down in 2018 in the face of significant community opposition.

However, there have been a number of representations to the effect that the County Council's decision appears to run counter to its own policy of encouraging community enterprise, as well as to a significant body of local opinion. And consequently, that the Parish Council should review whether simply to accept, or to interrogate or even contest that decision before the matter can be considered closed.

Various options have been mooted in email or other informal 'traffic' over the last few weeks. In ascending order of involvement, they seem to be:

- a. Do nothing: accept the decision without any further action, formally disband WRAG, and move on to other projects.
- b. Hold fire until such time as the preferred bidder completes the purchase, then revert to option a.
- c. Hold fire until such time as the preferred deal falls through then re-bid, either *without*, or (as per one suggestion) *with* the road.
- d. Challenge East Sussex to prove it conducted its assessment by the rules by way of a Freedom of Information application.
- e. Take qualified legal advice on the viability of a judicial review, to use as a 'big stick'.
- f. Take qualified legal advice on the viability of a judicial review, with the intention of pursuing it if the advice is favourable.

[Of course, these options apply only to the Council which was the legal bidding party in the process. The CIC FrowReSource was not a *bidding party*, although it might be entitled to be heard as an interested party. But that is a matter for the FrowReSource board, and it would have to secure its own funding for any action].

Council is advised to take a definite position at this point because certain legal time limits will apply.

***ACTION: to consider & resolve as appropriate***

**16. TO CONSIDER & RESOLVE ON THE COUNCIL'S INVOLVEMENT IN HM THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS**

An official timetable has now been published for the jubilee celebrations in June. However, many individual communities are planning events or initiatives of their own to mark the occasion, and inevitably Council will be asked if anything is planned for Forest Row. Council may wish to consider nominating someone to take charge of any proposals on its behalf.

***ACTION: to consider & resolve as appropriate.***

**17. TO RESOLVE ON THE ISSUE OF AN ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR 2022**

Because of the pandemic, Council resolved last year not to call the Annual Parish Meeting. I advised on the anomalous position that the meeting should by law be held, but that although various persons are *entitled* to convene it, no one person or body is legally *obliged* to call it, and for 2021, we resolved not to do so.

The situation is slightly better this year, and a decision needs to be made whether Council will this year call/ host an APM. The rules are that it must be held between 1<sup>st</sup> March & 1<sup>st</sup> June (inclusive) on seven clear days' notice, not on licensed premises, and to begin not earlier than 6 pm, and if the Council Chairman attends, he or she must chair the meeting.

***ACTION: to resolve as appropriate.***

**18. NOTICES, CONSULTATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE**

None that have not been previously circulated in Councillors Reading or Briefings.

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

# **FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL**

## **ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

**PERIOD - from: 16/09/2021 to: 12/01/2022**

<b>DECISION TAKEN</b>	<b>REASONS</b>	<b>OFFICERS NAME</b>	<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>COST</b>
Electrical Repairs	Necessary repairs	The Clerk & Cllrs Spackman & Williams	05.11.2021	1584.00
New Mower	To replace unrepairable existing	The Asst Clerk, Cllrs Spackman and Wogan	18.11.2021	1325.00
Electrical Repairs	To replace consumer units – necessary repairs	The Asst Clerk, Cllrs. Spackman & Williams	04.01.2022	1968.00

## Summary Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 10/01/2022

Month No: 10

## Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<b><u>Finance &amp; Policy</u></b>						
Income	424,614	429,760	5,146			98.8%
Expenditure	292,715	393,905	101,190	0	101,190	74.3%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>131,899</u>					
<b><u>Amenities &amp; Services</u></b>						
Income	17,358	12,100	(59,258)			143%
Expenditure	18,101	27,750	(44,351)	0	(44,351)	65%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(744)</u>					
<b><u>Property &amp; Assets</u></b>						
Income	33,031	30,250	(2,781)			109.2%
Expenditure	39,972	54,250	14,278	0	14,278	73.7%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(6,941)</u>					
<b><u>Planning</u></b>						
Income	0	0	0			0.0%
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>0</u>					
<b><u>Localism &amp; Community Projects</u></b>						
Income	29,831	29,700	(131)			100.4%
Expenditure	13,753	22,000	8,247	0	8,247	62.5%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>16,078</u>					
<b>Grand Totals:-</b>						
Income	504,834	501,810	(57,023)			100.6%
Expenditure	364,541	497,905	79,364	0	79,364	73.2%
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>140,293</u>	<u>3,905</u>	<u>(136,388)</u>			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>140,293</u>					



## AMENITIES & SERVICES REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

TUESDAY 18TH JANUARY 2022

The weather during this last quarter has been awful but the outdoor maintenance team has coped well. A new member of staff has been employed and joined the team just before Christmas.

The acquisition of more land for the cemetery extension is now of utmost importance and it is hoped to begin the process after the next committee meeting in March.

The Parish Council proposed to East Sussex County Council that two additional cuts be added to Forest Row's grass cutting schedule, for which it would pay. Unfortunately this was rejected and there will be two cuts per year as previously.

The trees donated by the Woodland Trust have now been planted by the New Enchantment planting scheme in locations identified by this committee. Due to covid and the weather this initiative had been delayed.

Financially A&S are in a steady position. A&S figures are, as previously noted, skewed by the inclusion of the skatepark extension account. Once they are removed, income is at 143% of forecast and expenditure at 65%.

For the next financial year the committee hope to achieve the purchase of the land for the cemetery extension and for Gilham Bank to be tidied up.

Cllr J Wogan  
Chairman  
11th January 2022