

Forest Row Parish Council

Clerk: Mr David O'Driscoll
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(Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 2pm)



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

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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 9th JANUARY 2024 in the Garden Room at
the Community Centre at **7.30 PM**.

Date: 3rd January 2024

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. RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 5TH DECEMBER 2023
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS/DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR THIS MEETING
5. DELEGATED DECISIONS

REPORTS (written reports to be taken as read unless there are queries)

6. CHAIR'S COMMENTS
7. CLERKS REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION
 - 7.1 Appraisals
 - 7.2 Clerk's recording of meetings
 - 7.3 Forthcoming meeting of the Personnel Committee
 - 7.4 Co-option to Facilities Committee
8. SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT (Q3)
9. PRINCIPAL COUNCILS
10. STANDING COMMITTEES & PLANNING GROUP
11. WORKING GROUPS
 - 11.1 Outreach & Communications
 - 11.2 Discovery
 - 11.3 Road Safety
 - 11.4 Shed Project
 - 11.5 Youth Forum
 - 11.6 Community Christmas Celebration
12. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES (IF ANY)

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION

13. ADOPTION OF THE REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2023-25 & SETTING OF THE PRECEPT
 14. ALLOCATION OF THE CO-OPTED MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES
 15. ALLOWANCE FOR CO-OPTED MEMBERS
 16. A WORKING GROUP TO RESEARCH AN ENERGY/INVESTMENT VEHICLE
 17. POSSIBLE RECORDING/BROADCASTING OF MEETINGS
 18. PROPOSALS FOR A LEGACY
-
19. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL

ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PERIOD - from: 29/11/2023 to: 03/01/2024

DECISION TAKEN	REASONS	OFFICERS NAME	DATE OF DECISION	COST
REMOVAL OF FLYTIPPING	URGENT	The Clerk	20/12/23	540.00

<p style="text-align: center;">COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING FOR THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL ON 9th JANUARY 2024</p>

1. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
3. **RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 5th DECEMBER 2023**
4. **INTERESTS/ DISPENSATIONS** 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.
5. **DELEGATED DECISIONS:** (as attached to backing papers)

ACTION: to note & approve

REPORTS

6. **CHAIR'S COMMENTS**
7. **CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION**

7.1 Appraisals. I will be undertaking staff appraisals during the month of January. Appraisals of the Gages staff are undertaken by Sandra Sameiro, and of the youth workers by Mel Rey-Mesher as supervisors of those services. Staff appraisals are confidential, but any generic issues arising may be referred to the Personnel Committee

7.2 Clerk's recording of meetings. Members know that I routinely record Full Council & Committee meetings, as an aide-memoire and checking device for drafting the minutes. The recording has no legal status, and following a discussion with fellow-clerks about the Freedom of Information implications of the issue, I will now be routinely deleting the recordings as soon as the formal minutes are approved. If any member has a genuine reason for requiring a copy before deletion they will have to apply to the office in writing, but should be aware that they then become the Data Controller of the transcript and subject to GDPR restrictions. [The larger question of whether our meetings should be broadcast in some form is a different issue and will be discussed at a later point].

7.3 Forthcoming meeting of the Personnel Committee. There will be a confidential meeting of the Personnel Committee later this month, principally to consider staff requirement issues for the coming financial year, and also the draft of a revised staff handbook. Any required ratifications will be brought to the next available Full Council.

7.4 Co-option to Facilities Committee. Council voted to co-opt Alex Waters jnr to the Facilities Committee "if regulations permitted". Sadly, they do not, but he is of course free to attend meetings and contribute under our adopted public participation provisions, but will simply not be able to vote.

9. SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

A current printout is supplied with the papers to end quarter 3, at which point the performance against forecast should be in the order of 75%.

- For Finance & Policy, income (with apportioned precept figure) is at 74.4% of forecast, and expenditure at 77.6%, both acceptable figures, with the backpay from the recent settlement accounted for.
- For Facilities, the combined figure from the two original committees shows income at 79.6% of forecast and expenditure at 93.7%. The income from the property side (91.9%) is still subsidising the amenities side (49.0%) where cemetery income remains particularly low. The overall high percentage of expenditure reflects the fact that major outgoings such as rates are now complete for the year.
I am hopeful of amalgamating the cost codes for the two sections of Facilities early this coming year
- For Community Services, income is running at 71.1% of forecast and expenditure at 83.2%. As previously noted, the effective privatisation of the market has come at a significant cost, currently offset by unspent cost codes elsewhere.

If there are any queries, it is helpful to raise them in advance, so the office can research replies.

9. **PRINCIPAL COUNCILS**

County & District Councillors have been invited to attend. No written reports have been received for inclusion with the agenda.

10. **STANDING COMMITTEES & PLANNING GROUP**

Chairs of Committees have been invited to report. Written reports have been received from Finance & Policy and from the Planning Group, and are attached.

11. **WORKING GROUPS**

Reports have been invited from a representative of each of the groups. Written reports have been received from Community Outreach/Comms (which includes a section on the Youth Forum) and from the Christmas Community Celebration, and are attached.

12. **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Representatives may report on any items of relevance.

ACTION: to note reports Please note that where written reports have been submitted in advance, they will be “taken as read”, except where there are queries or clarifications

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION/ DECISION

13. **ADOPTION OF THE REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2024-25 & SETTING OF THE PRECEPT**

At the meeting of Full Council on 5th December last, after robust discussion Council adopted the draft revenue budget in the version requiring a precept of £650,000. I said in my briefing note: *“barring any genuine emergencies which necessitate last-minute amendments, it will be formally adopted and the resultant precept set at Full Council in January.”* No such emergencies have been notified to me during the past month.

In response to some of the comment which followed that last meeting, I can only repeat what I said in my advice note:

“It was inevitable that the precept for the coming year 2024-25 would have to rise significantly: a) to redress the internal balance of the council’s finances; b) to compensate for the ongoing effects of inflation on our overheads; and c) to allow for Council to invest in a

community-led programme of service development, which was the platform on which the Forest Row Forward group based its approach to the electorate. So much for the background, and the current Council has no need to apologise for its stance."

Council is accordingly invited to vote as requested. The reserves budget will be finalised at the year end.

ACTION: to resolve accordingly

14. ALLOCATION OF THE CO-OPTED MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEES

Cllrs Rainbow and Taylor-Smith need to be allocated to fill the vacancies in the committees left by the previous resignations. These are currently :

Finance & Policy – 1 vacancy /Facilities – 2 vacancies / Community Services – 1 vacancy

Planning – 1 vacancy

ACTION: to allocate accordingly

15. ALLOWANCE FOR CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Under Part 5 of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, members are entitled to be paid an allowance in respect of their service as councillors (the level of allowance being proposed by an independent panel each year), but 'member' is defined as an 'elected ' member. However as a matter of law, my reading of the regulations is that while co-opted members may not be legally *entitled* to such a payment, it is *not unlawful* for a council to vote to make an equivalent payment to a co-opted member in good standing who is doing the same work. Council may therefore wish to incorporate such a provision into its local regulations , provided that the overall scheme is published on the website following adoption.

ACTION: to resolve accordingly

16. A WORKING GROUP TO RESEARCH AN ENERGY/INVESTMENT VEHICLE

This topic was raised in the 5th December agenda but deferred for lack of time. Briefly, Cllr Christie has proposed the possibility of an investment company to support local energy saving and generation projects. This is at the legal & practical feasibility research stage, and Cllr Christie has prepared a business case which sets out the proposal in detail. The issue is whether Council will support at this stage the research & development stage (including costs) of exploring the idea as a sponsored project. Cllr Christie's business case is attached

ACTION: to resolve accordingly

17. POSSIBLE RECORDING/ BROADCASTING OF MEETINGS

This is an opportunity to consider whether - as a principle – Council would wish to consider some form of broadcasting of its Full Council and/or Committees. Following that, ways and means can be considered if appropriate.

ACTION: to resolve as necessary

18. PROPOSALS FOR A LEGACY

We have had an initial communication from the executor of a person who used to live in Forest Row for a legacy of £2500 to be given to the Council to spend "for the community benefit" Ideas?

ACTION: to resolve as appropriate

19. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE.

12:18

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 03/01/2024

Month No: 10

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
Finance & Policy							
401 Finance & Administration							
4176 FI-Precept Received	334,500	446,000	0			75%	
4180 Misc Income	38	0	(38)			0.0%	
4181 FI-Wayleave Income	6	5	(1)			112.0%	
4182 FI-Devolved Services Income	735	1,450	715			50.7%	
4183 Community Warden Hire	0	10,000	10,000			0.0%	
4190 FI-Interest Received	6,266	1,500	(4,766)			417.7%	
Finance & Administration :- Income	341,545	458,955	5,911			74.4%	0
4100 PENSION TOP UP	0	4,000	4,000		4,000	0.0%	
4101 FI-Salaries	295,063	365,000	69,937		69,937	80.8%	
4102 FI-Payroll Outsource Costs	385	420	35		35	91.7%	
4103 FI-Contrib. to Library Salary	0	4,000	4,000		4,000	0.0%	
4108 FI-Staff Training/Travel	191	1,000	809		809	19.1%	
4110 Community Warden Costs	527	500	(27)		(27)	105.4%	
4111 Forest Rate	31	25	(6)		(6)	122.4%	
4120 Postage	75	500	425		425	15.0%	
4121 Telecommunications	6,280	7,700	1,420		1,420	81.6%	
4123 Stationery	541	600	59		59	90.2%	
4124 FI-Subscriptions	3,851	6,600	2,749		2,749	58.3%	
4125 FI-Insurance	10,528	10,000	(528)		(528)	105.3%	
4126 Printer/copier	2,831	4,000	1,169		1,169	70.8%	
4133 FI-Chairman's Fund	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4134 FI-Parish Meeting	0	50	50		50	0.0%	
4135 FI-Councillors Training/Travel	475	500	25		25	95.0%	
4136 Security Checks	132	150	18		18	87.8%	
4137 FI-Members Allowances	1,402	6,000	4,598		4,598	23.4%	
4151 FI - Bank Charges	1,198	1,800	602		602	66.6%	
4156 FI-Legal & professional fees	1,738	3,500	1,762		1,762	49.7%	
4157 FI-Audit & Financial Managemen	2,582	3,300	718		718	78.2%	
4158 FI-Van Lease	60	300	240		240	20.1%	
4160 Office Equipment	424	500	76		76	84.8%	
4165 FI-Election Fund	5,118	4,000	(1,118)		(1,118)	127.9%	
4166 Wayleaves	1	25	24		24	5.6%	
4169 Community Occasion	896	500	(396)		(396)	179.2%	
7101 PR- Advertising/Publicity	33	50	18		18	65.0%	
7102 PR-Website	720	750	30		30	96.0%	
7110 PR-Newsletter & Distribution	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
Finance & Administration :- Indirect Expenditure	335,081	426,770	91,689	0	91,689	78.5%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	117,963	32,185	(85,778)				

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 03/01/2024

Month No: 10

Committee Report

Amenities & Services**101 Allotments**

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>				

102 Village Greens

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	5,216	8,000	2,784		2,784	65.2%	
1237 Outdoor Planting	634	1,000	366		366	63.4%	
1239 VG-Utilities	263	100	(163)		(163)	263.3%	
Village Greens :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>6,113</u>	<u>9,100</u>	<u>2,987</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,987</u>	<u>67.2%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(5,080)</u>	<u>(8,350)</u>	<u>(3,270)</u>				

104 Amenities General

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>				

105 Outdoor Maintenance

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>				

203 Street Lighting

2314 SL-Power	3,762	6,600	2,838		2,838	57.0%	
2336 Streetlights	17,166	8,250	(8,916)		(8,916)	208.1%	
Street Lighting :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>20,927</u>	<u>14,850</u>	<u>(6,077)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(6,077)</u>	<u>140.9%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(20,927)</u>	<u>(14,850)</u>	<u>6,077</u>				

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 03/01/2024

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	8,338	17,000	8,662			49.0%	
Expenditure	34,896	33,345	(1,551)	0	(1,551)	104.7%	
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(26,559)</u>						
<u>Property & Assets</u>							
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 03/01/2024

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	33,994	33,000	(994)		(994)	103.0%	
3116 CC-Upkeep/Cleaning	7,150	13,200	6,050		6,050	54.2%	
3127 CC - Drinks Machine	811	770	(41)		(41)	105.3%	
Community Centre :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>41,955</u>	<u>46,970</u>	<u>5,015</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,015</u>	<u>89.3%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(4,622)</u>	<u>(8,670)</u>	<u>(4,048)</u>				
<u>303 Venue on the Green</u>							
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	38,876	42,300	3,424			91.9%	
Expenditure	44,543	51,470	6,927	0	6,927	86.5%	
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(5,666)</u>						
Grand Totals:- Income	<u>47,214</u>	<u>59,300</u>	<u>12,086</u>			<u>79.6%</u>	
Expenditure	<u>79,439</u>	<u>84,815</u>	<u>5,376</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,376</u>	<u>93.7%</u>	
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(32,225)</u>	<u>(25,515)</u>	<u>6,710</u>				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(32,225)</u>						

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 03/01/2024

Month No: 10

Committee Report

Localism & Community Projects**206 Community Transport**

2678 Medical Car Scheme Income	131	300	169			43.8%	
4180 Misc Income	27	0	(27)			0.0%	
Community Transport :- Income	158	300	142			52.7%	0
2554 Wealdlink	510	1,000	490		490	51.0%	
2601 Voluntary Medical Car Service	0	200	200		200	0.0%	
Community Transport :- Indirect Expenditure	510	1,200	690	0	690	42.5%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(352)	(900)	(548)				

207 Market

3184 CC-Market Income	5,404	9,000	3,596			60.0%	
Market :- Income	5,404	9,000	3,596			60.0%	0
3151 CC-Market expenditure	5,928	1,430	(4,498)		(4,498)	414.5%	
Market :- Indirect Expenditure	5,928	1,430	(4,498)	0	(4,498)	414.5%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(523)	7,570	8,093				

209 Localism & Community Proj Misc

2905 Repair Cafe & Wellbeing Servic	(516)	2,000	2,516			(25.8%)	
Localism & Community Proj Misc :- Income	(516)	2,000	2,516			(25.8%)	0
2603 Emergency Supplies	0	6,000	6,000		6,000	0.0%	
2700 Repair Cafe & Wellbeing	300	4,000	3,700		3,700	7.5%	
Localism & Community Proj Misc :- Indirect Expenditure	300	10,000	9,700	0	9,700	3.0%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(816)	(8,000)	(7,184)				

304 Cafe

3480 Gages - Sales	17,862	20,000	2,138			89.3%	
4180 Misc Income	100	0	(100)			0.0%	
Cafe :- Income	17,962	20,000	2,038			89.8%	0
3436 Gages-Purchase of Equipment	3,576	2,200	(1,376)		(1,376)	162.5%	
3460 Gages -Purchases Food etc	14,116	13,200	(916)		(916)	106.9%	
Cafe :- Indirect Expenditure	17,692	15,400	(2,292)	0	(2,292)	114.9%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	270	4,600	4,330				

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 03/01/2024

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>306 Thursday Club</u>							
3680 TC-Subscriptions	117	400	283			29.2%	
Thursday Club :- Income	<u>117</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>283</u>			<u>29.2%</u>	<u>0</u>
3636 TC-Running Costs	238	1,100	862		862	21.6%	
Thursday Club :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>238</u>	<u>1,100</u>	<u>862</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>862</u>	<u>21.6%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(121)</u>	<u>(700)</u>	<u>(579)</u>				
<u>406 Youth Provision</u>							
4676 YP-Grants & Other Income	1,201	2,500	1,299			48.0%	
Youth Provision :- Income	<u>1,201</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>1,299</u>			<u>48.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
4603 YP - Dev costs & General Expen	2,485	3,500	1,015		1,015	71.0%	
Youth Provision :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>2,485</u>	<u>3,500</u>	<u>1,015</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,015</u>	<u>71.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(1,284)</u>	<u>(1,000)</u>	<u>284</u>				
Localism & Community Projects :- Income	24,326	34,200	9,874			71.1%	
Expenditure	27,153	32,630	5,477	0	5,477	83.2%	
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(2,826)</u>						
Grand Totals:- Income	24,326	34,200	9,874			71.1%	
Expenditure	27,153	32,630	5,477	0	5,477	83.2%	
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(2,826)</u>	<u>1,570</u>	<u>4,396</u>				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(2,826)</u>						

Finance and Policy Report December 2023

Year to date financial report. Month 9 of 12:

We are at 66.2 % of the total expected precept and targeted F+P income i.e. £303,656 out of the target of £458,955

Expenditure wise we are at 69.7% of the target annual expected expenditure. i.e.£ 297,668 versus £426,770.

Both income and expenditure are within acceptable tolerances for the current period.

Itemized costs/income have previous been distributed and discussed at the most recent F+P meeting

Pre-School

We've been supporting the new trustees at the pre-school as they've been restructuring the staff on the ground to make the school more financial viable and independent. I'm delighted that they have made some very positive changes to safeguard the future of the school and are creating a new foundation for growth that will enhance the current children' and future children's experience.

Grants

Recent grants awarded:

Wildheart Radio:	£1,523.40
Victim support:	£300.00
St John Ambulance:	£300.00
St Peter & St James Hospice:	£500.00

Andrew Gilbert

Chair

F+P Committee

19.12.23

Planning Group Report for Full Council 09/01/2024

The Planning group has not been dealing with any particularly controversial applications although sometimes seemingly easy ones turn out to be a bit troublesome.

The group are thinking about and making suggestions for discussion with Patricia regarding the work being done for the forthcoming Wealden Local Plan as some of the descriptions of Forest Row's situation may need to be updated since the last attempted plan documents.

Cllr Maureen Summers

FRPC Community Outreach Group – Report
2 January 2024

Andi Jaffay on behalf of Portia Cocks, Angela Evans, Kate Taylor-Smith, Alex Walters (y), Zuzu la Djoï, Johnny Scratchley, Charlotte Harvey, Michelle Matthews, Jason Eichner, Adam Scott, Alex V, Ben Christie

The Community Outreach Group has melded with the Communications (Comms) Group, to form the Outreach & Comms working group. With a lot of overlap between the work of the two groups and several members being in each group, it made sense to everyone.

Having established a few methods of engagement, we are now onto the Winter phase of our plans. The Meet & Greet events, headed up by Zuzu D, are well established and well attended. Feedback from the community is positive and everyone enjoys Charlotte's wonderful baking!

We publicised and offered a roundtable session with Sarah Charlton - local community member and a professional in hosting listening circles – but there was no take up. We plan to trial these out incorporated into the January Meet & Greet, using a softer approach (calling them “group chats” and using more of a relaxed breakout group style). If feedback from the attendees is positive, we will offer the roundtables separately again. If not, we will discuss and rethink at our next meeting.

The 3D community consultation model of the village, headed up by Adam S, is planned for March-April, with several schools, nurseries and community groups on board with the idea and planning to make their section of the village.

More community postboxes have been made. There is an issue with how prominent these are, but we are working with local venues to ensure they are accessible to the community passing by. Seasons in particular, have been very positive in how they can support the postboxes being more visible and also in helping with posters and publicity for Outreach events.

The Youth Forum is in its beginning stages, headed up by Alex W (y) and Mel the youth worker, and is well supported by a group of local councillors (county, district and parish). Young people are already stepping forward to be part of the development of the Forum.

The newsletter, designed and headed up by Jason E, is due to go out to all households in paper copy late January. Community members will then be able to sign up to receiving email newsletters from then on and paper copies will be circulated around the village on an ongoing basis.

Councillors take it in turns to write a 500 word piece for the Forest Row Local Magazine each month.

Outreach & Comms is glad to be considered a budget for 2024, under Community Services. It is uncertain as yet whether the £2000 will be enough, as there may be projects and associated costs as yet unknown at this early stage of the year. We will need to see how it goes and fundraise where necessary.



Christmas Community Celebration Working Group Report

Date: 30.12.23

This working group was set up after the first retreat of the current council in May 2023. The philosophy behind the initiative was that this would be one way to bring together different parts of our diverse community both in the planning and in the celebration on Christmas Day.

We formed a core group and began meeting in June 23. We had a total of nine meetings. Small groups were formed from the core group, which included chef's group, volunteer's group, musician's group and Santa's grotto group. The core group held the vision. During this time of planning we began to see that we were laying down a template for possible future events. It has become clear that, due to the popularity of the event, we will attempt to repeat it in future years.

Financial summary

We raised money from local businesses through collection pots and donations. In total, we raised £ 717.19 We spent £523.02. The remaining amount will form a seed fund for next year of £100 and the remainder will go to the community fridge.

The Parish Council agreed to provide the sum of £100. We have not needed to draw on this money and hope that it can be put forward for next year.

Bringing together the community

We have all met people new to us in the community through this endeavour. We have opened the event to the whole village but have directly targeted publicity towards people who may particularly benefit from it. The planning, from the many meetings to chopping vegetables together in Seasons kitchen, has brought together people from a whole range of backgrounds.

On Christmas Day, 90 people of all ages came together in the Community Centre. Roughly half of these were volunteers. In keeping with the original philosophy, both volunteers and recipients had a lot to offer in terms of time, material goods, enthusiasm and energy. We worked together on the project and sat down to eat and have fun together on the day.

We utilised all of the public areas of the Community Centre, the kitchen, the Main Hall for food, The Garden Room for the Santa's Grotto, the Rose Room for the children's play area and the Blue Room for the King's Speech.



Community Outreach

We had 40 active volunteers in the WhatsApp group, all of whom participated during the run up to the event and many of whom were grateful for the company over the Christmas period.

The Chef's group was made up of 7 people, of whom 3 were professional Chefs.

The Santa's Grotto group had 5 in the core and over 10 making it 2 days in advance – it was completed in one day.

Clearing up was carried out after the event for 2 hours. Boxing day saw a dozen people return and finish.

Projected future activity

The enthusiasm for this event was significant. Not only did we feed 90 people on the day, many people came into the Community Centre to enjoy the atmosphere and partake in the festivities, to offer further donations of food and volunteer to help wash and clear up. The response from the participants in every area was to request that this be repeated – in light of this we plan to make this an annual Christmas Day event. We envisage that it will grow in size. We will be looking at how we can accommodate more people and the venues available in our village next year that can manage a lot of people. Cooking facilities need to be reviewed.

There is a meeting of the core group and new volunteers from the community who wish to take on responsibility for specific parts of the day on 27th February 2024.

Councillors Angela Evans and Kate Taylor-Smith



Forest Row Investment Company R&D Proposal

November 2023

BUSINESS CASE FOR IN-BUDGET EXPENDITURE

Executive summary

This proposal sets out the rationale for the creation of an investment company for Forest Row, and a proposal to fund an R&D development phase establishing and carrying out the steps do so. Such a vehicle would help build a stronger, more resilient community by supporting and creating local jobs and businesses, and enable Forest Row to directly benefit from clean, affordable, locally sourced energy.

Problem statement

Forest Row, like many communities across the country, is faced with mounting energy costs that amount to a substantial and increasing proportion of household bills which affect different members of the community disproportionately. At the same time opportunities for local business incubation, mentorship and training are few and far between, with little in the way of government and corporate initiatives locally. Those who do have money to invest do not have attractive options to invest in local community assets and initiatives and are thus faced with putting funds in global schemes with little clarity about impacts and use, and the prospect of increasingly uncertain returns from traditional forms of investment in the future.

Situation analysis

The establishment of a community investment vehicle in Forest Row would provide a transformative building block for the village in financial, social and environmental terms, enabling a catalytic sequence of resilience through energy efficiency and generation at community level, economic activity and job creation, positive environmental action, and community cohesion through local endeavour.

This initiative is time sensitive in that we have the opportunity now to leverage partnership with the launch of a local energy efficiency business [OneZero](#) which seeks to partner with the community in piloting their business here in Forest Row in the first quarter of next year. This would see successive phases of appropriate Forest Row housing stock being retrofitted with energy efficiency measures (battery storage, insulation, solar panels, heat pumps etc) potentially financed by Forest Row's own finance vehicle, offering both reduced energy costs for households and returns for local investors. This could in turn start to build the asset base to finance further

local energy initiatives, such as energy generation, energy storage and community heat, and other community assets in the future.

Solution options

The establishment of such a vehicle would serve to:

- Empower local people to develop energy projects that will benefit the local area, meet environment goals, provide dependable investment returns and the potential for community investment at local level.
- Projects could potentially save and generate clean energy, such as an energy efficiency programme for Forest Row housing stock, a rural heat network, ground mount and rooftop solar energy generation, energy storage and trading using community electric vehicles.
- kick-start private investment to start or scale up projects and invest in community assets.

Project description

We propose to undertake a concerted phase of development of this initiative over the coming months with the following activities and goals:

- Desk research to identify key organisations, structures and expertise in the energy, impact investment and government community energy and local finance development space.
- Interviews with key organisations to develop appropriate strategy, legal structures, and timelines for Forest Row.
- Begin application process for development funding from relevant organisations.
- Initial community communications programme for dissemination through FRPC.

We are already in touch with the [Community Energy Fund](#) about development funding from March 2024 which could underwrite further development of this project and have been invited by CEF to deliver an EOI ahead of a full application in January. However, the process of successfully winning these funds and others like them is highly competitive, so we seek to ask the community to resource this initiative through community reserve funds to the end of this budget and capital project R&D in the next year.

Cost-benefit analysis

We have a wealth of energy, finance and business expertise in the community to help develop and build this project, and 3 core professionals willing and able to put time into the initial stages.

Geoff Dunnett, a former project finance lawyer specialising in the energy sector; Fionna Winston, a chartered accountant, and Benjamin Christie, a parish councillor and former project developer in the renewable energy sector.

We request £5,000 funds from this year's reserve budget to enable development work on this project to start in December 2023 to March 2024.

Breakdown:

Activity	Unit	Cost
R&D and project development	£1000 per month x 4	£4000
Professional fees and expenses (legal, incorporation, web etc)	£1000	£1000
Total		£5000

Dependant on other funding sources, we will then seek capital R&D funding from next year's budget in April 2024.

Recommendation

We recommend that the parish council grasp the opportunity presented at this moment with a key local partner in OneZero, and approve this proposal to enable the establishment of a potentially transformative project in Forest Row's community and environment.