

# 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. Josephson (Chairman), Davies, Eichner,  
Hopkins, R Lewin, T Lewin, Moore, Pritchitt,  
Spackman, Summers, Tyler, Waters, Williams,  
Withers and Wogan

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 a meeting of the  
FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL to be held on  
**TUESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2023** in the Garden Room at  
the Community Centre at **7.30 PM.**

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D O'Driscoll", written over a horizontal line.

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.

## A G E N D A

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETING
  - 3.1 To approve the minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022
  - 3.2 To consider any objections to deletion of the digital transcript of that meeting
4. CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM LAST ORDINARY MEETING.
5. TO DECLARE ANY INTERESTS OR REQUEST DISPENSATION PERTAINING TO THE ITEMS BELOW

## TO NOTE REPORTS

6. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS
7. CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION
  - 7.1 Arrangement of agendas for 10<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> January
  - 7.2 Reinstatement of SLR meetings
  - 7.3 The external audit
  - 7.4 Staff movements
  - 7.5 Health & Safety audit
  - 7.6 The old 'Tip' site
  - 7.7 Election dates for May 2023
8. REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2023-2024  
To receive queries and proposals, and resolve as appropriate, on the consolidated draft budget for 2023-2024
9. TO ELECT CLLR. EICHNER TO COMMITTEE
10. TO DISCUSS THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY WARDEN

*Pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the committee believes that the public and press to be excluded from the meeting on the grounds of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted*

- 11. FOREST ROW MARKET
  - 11.1 To receive a report on progress with the 2023 market arrangements and take any necessary decisions
  - 11.2 To resolve on closing remuneration for the former market staff
- 12. NOTICES, CONSULTATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE
- 13. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

**FULL COUNCIL**

**BACKING PAPERS FOR MEETING 10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2013**

	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page nos</b>
	Clerk's general briefing note	1-2
7.7	May 2023 election timetable	3-5
8	Consolidated final draft budget	6-7
	(Second) Revised note on the Budget	8-9
10	Community Warden current job description	10
	Role of the Warden: warden's own view	11
11	Clerk's confidential briefing note to item 11	12

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING FOR THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL ON 10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2023</b></p>
---

**1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**3. RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETING** Meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022

**4. CLARIFICATION OF ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING**

***ACTION: to discharge as appropriate***

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/ REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION** Members who have a financial interest in any item in this agenda may wish to declare a personal interest.

***ACTION: to note***

**6. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

**7. TO NOTE CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION**

7.1 Arrangement of agendas for 10<sup>th</sup> /17<sup>th</sup> January As Members will recall, the Full Council of 13<sup>th</sup> December had to be cancelled, and its agenda items postponed.

There are also customarily two budget meetings in January: one to deal with Members' observations and queries, the other formally to adopt the budget and set the precept. The other business from 13<sup>th</sup> December has therefore been apportioned between the two meetings of 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> January (with formal reports carried over to 17<sup>th</sup> January).

7.2 Reinstatement of SLR. A meeting took place on 28<sup>th</sup> November with four FRPC councillors, the County Councillor and four Highways staff in attendance. The minutes are available on request. These meetings are intended to be six-monthly.

7.3 The external audit. Confirmation of completion of the external audit for 2021-22 has still not been received from PKF Littlejohn, but they have nevertheless been re-appointed as external auditors for next year.

7.4 Staff movements. Georgina Tod is settling well into her receptionist /admin role and has undertaken two training sessions. The Community Warden was signed off until 3rd January for rehabilitation of his broken ankle, but has now returned to work. The community cook is also returning to work on a phased basis.

7.5 Health & Safety audit. Our H&S consultant undertook a full audit on 30<sup>th</sup> November and has since submitted a report which gives a clean bill of health, with three minor proposals for improvement. All regular checks are being undertaken & recorded. A copy of the full report is available on request.

7.6 The old 'Tip' site. This is now open for business as a metal reclamation yard and the owner is willing to purchase scrap metal (but not fridges) from the public for cash. I have not yet had confirmation that the ACV status of the site has been rescinded.

7.7 Election dates for May 2023 The Notice of Election will be published on 20<sup>th</sup> March and nominations can be submitted from then until 4pm on 4<sup>th</sup> April. The notice of nominations (showing whether a contested election is required) will be published on 5<sup>th</sup> April. Polling Day is 4<sup>th</sup> May and all current Councillors will be discharged on 9<sup>th</sup> May. The first meeting of the new Council must then take place within 14 days. Schedule attached.

**8. TO RECEIVE QUERIES & PROPOSALS AND RESOLVE AS APPROPRIATE, ON THE CONSOLIDATED DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2023-2024**

The 'Star Chamber' meeting of Committee Chairmen took place on 14<sup>th</sup> December, and the consolidated final draft is attached, together with a revised advice note, are attached. This is the opportunity for individual Members to raise any queries they may have on the draft budget and to make any final proposals for amendment. It is submitted with the following three comments:

- Please consider the figures and read the advice note in detail *before the meeting*. Significant work by the RFO and Committees goes into the draft, and 'off the cuff' suggestions at this stage are not appropriate. Any major proposals for change would need an argued business case.
- There are two options in the expenditure section of the F&P budget and the reasons for this are contained in the advice note. This will require a decision by Full Council, but it is not simply a question of 'cheaper' or 'dearer'.
- This agenda item is offered as the final opportunity for Councillors to refine the budget and give their approval to the resultant precept calculation. The meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January is a formal exercise of budget adoption and precept setting, and it is not meant to be a further opportunity for amendment, unless there is a genuine emergency.

Please note that if any Member would like a large format A3 copy of the draft budget, there will be copies available in the office

***ACTION: to consider and resolve accordingly***

**9. TO ELECT CLLR EICHNER TO COMMITTEE**

Cllr Eichner was co-opted as a Councillor in September, but there has as yet been no opportunity to vote him on to a Standing Committee. It is proposed that this be rectified at this meeting, certainly in respect of the Community Services Committee.

***ACTION: to resolve accordingly***

**10. TO DISCUSS THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY WARDEN**

**Note:** this item, which I have placed on the agenda at Council's request, is listed as a discussion of the role, not of the individual in post,. The current job description is attached to the backing papers, plus the warden's own perspective on his job role.

**Provided that the discussion is confined to that specific topic and the content of the job description, there is no objection to its proceeding.**

However, Council should be aware that the Personnel Committee discussed the role of the warden at its meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022, and felt at the time that HR advice should be factored in. I have a note from our consultant on the HR aspects of the issue, and the advice is clear that once personal factors are introduced into the discussion, it should not be a matter in the first instance for Full Council, but for the Personnel Committee. I will make a copy of that HR note available at the meeting, but because of its content, it will need to be treated as confidential and the copies should please be returned post-meeting.

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

Item 11 needs to be treated as confidential and a separate briefing note is being sent to Members.

**12. NOTICES, CONSULTATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE**

None not already provided in Councillors' Reading and/or Briefing

**13. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE**

## 2023 Election Timetable – Thursday 4 May 2023

For scheduled principal area, Combined Authority Mayoral, Local Authority Mayoral and parish council elections in **England**

Event	Election	Working days before poll (deadline if not midnight)	Date (deadline if not midnight)
Publication of notice of election	All	Not later than 25 days	Not later than Monday 27 March
Delivery of nomination papers, consent to nominations and home address forms	CAM	Between the hours of 10am and 4pm on any day after the publication of the notice of election until 4pm on the nineteenth day before polling day	Between 10am and 4pm on any working day after publication of notice of election and until 4pm on Tuesday 4 April
Delivery of nomination papers, consent to nominations and home address forms	All except CAM	From the date and time stated on the notice of election until 4pm on the nineteenth day before polling day	On any working day during the hours stated on the notice of election until 4pm on Tuesday 4 April
Deadline for delivery of nomination papers, consent to nominations and home address forms	All	19 days (4pm)	4pm on Tuesday 4 April
Making objections to nomination papers	CAM	On 19 days (10am to 5pm), subject to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Between 10am – 12 noon objections can be made to all delivered nominations</li> <li>Between 12 noon - 5pm objections can only be made to nominations delivered after 4pm, 20 days before the poll</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Between 10am and 12 noon on Tuesday 4 April objections can be made to all delivered nominations</li> <li>Between 12 noon - 5pm on Tuesday 4 April objections can only be made to nominations delivered after 4pm on Monday 3 April</li> </ul>
Deadline for withdrawals of nomination	All	19 days (4pm)	4pm on Tuesday 4 April
Deadline for notification of appointment of election agent	All except Parish	19 days (4pm)	4pm on Tuesday 4 April



## 2023 Election Timetable – Thursday 4 May 2023

For scheduled principal area, Combined Authority Mayoral, Local Authority Mayoral and parish council elections in **England**

Event	Election	Working days before poll (deadline if not midnight)	Date (deadline if not midnight)
<b>Polling day</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>0 (7am – 10pm)</b>	<b>7am to 10pm on Thursday 4 May</b>
Last time that electors can apply for a replacement for spoilt or lost postal votes	All	0 (5pm)	5pm on Thursday 4 May
Deadline for emergency proxy applications	All	0 (5pm)	5pm on Thursday 4 May
Last time to the receipt of applications to alter the register due to clerical error or by notice of the court following registration appeal	All	0 (9pm)	9pm on Thursday 4 May

**BUDGET 2023-24: CONSOLIDATED DRAFT : v.2 post Star Chamber**

FINANCE & POLICY INCOME	TBC	notes
4176 Precept		
4180 Misc F&P income		0 none guaranteed
4181 Wayleaves		5 unchanged
4182 Devolved services income		1450 unchanged
4183 Community warden hire		10000 allowing for sick leave
4185 Other insurances rec'd		0 none guaranteed
4190 Interest received		1500 based on current year
4380 Other grants/donations		0 none guaranteed
<b>TOTAL F&amp;P INCOME</b>		<b>12955 excl-precept &amp; ringfenced carryover</b>
<b>(= approx 103% of 2021-22 figure)</b>		

FINANCE & POLICY EXPENDITURE			notes
	Option A	Option B	
4100 Pension top-up	4000	4000	based on annual decrease
4101 Salaries	375000	365000	incl disputed contingency
4102 Payroll costs	420	420	unchanged
4103 Library salary	4000	4000	advised this year only
4108 Staff training & travel	1000	1000	estimate per current year
4110 C/Warden expenses	500	500	estimate per current year
4111 Forest rate	25	25	unchanged
4120 Postage	500	500	estimate per current year
4121 Telecommunications	7700	7700	estimate incl inflation uprate
4123 Stationery	600	600	estimate incl inflation uprate
4124 Subscriptions	6600	6600	estimate incl inflation uprate
4125 Insurances	10000	10000	estimate incl inflation uprate
4126 Printer/copier	4000	4000	estimate incl inflation uprate
4133 Chairmans Fund	500	500	estimate per current year
4134 Parish meeting/ event	50	50	estimate per current year
4135 Cllr training & travel	500	500	estimate per current year
4136 Security checks (DBS)	150	150	estimate per current year
4137 Cllr allowances	6000	6000	statutory reqst but unchanged
4151 Bank charges	1800	1800	estimate per current year
4156 legal & professional fees	3500	3500	estimate per current year
4157 Audit/financial mgt	3300	3300	estimate incl inflation uprate
4158 Van lease	300	300	single payment
4160 Office equipment	500	500	estimate per current year
4161 Office maintenance	0	0	estimate per current year
4165 Elections	4000	4000	election year
4166 Wayleaves	25	25	unchanged
4169 Community event	500	500	unchanged
4360 Grants made	7000	7000	unchanged
4361 FRSGA subsidy	2500	2500	unchanged
7101 Advertising	50	50	unchanged
7102 Website	750	750	estimate per current year
7110 Newsletter	500	500	estimate
NEW: projected PWLB repayment	0	0	to reserves
TOTAL F&P	446270	436270	
(=approx. 102% of 2021-2022 figure)			

PROPERTY & ASSETS: INCOME	
3180 CC lettings	15000 return to previous levels
3181 CC equipment hire	400 in line with prev years
3182 CC rents	22000 return to previous levels
3185 CC misc income	400 reasonable estimate
3187 CC drinks machine	500 reasonable estimate
3188 CC grants & donations	0 not predictable
3306 VotG income	4000 reasonable estimate
<b>TOTAL P&amp;A INCOME</b>	<b>42300</b>
<b>(= approx. 95% of 2022-23 figure)</b>	

PROPERTY & ASSETS: EXPENDITURE	
2136 Bus shelters	0 no budget allowance - to be
1439 Benches	0 financed through CIL monies
1442 Litter bins	0 ditto
2551 Offsite car park	0 ditto
2553 Grit bins	0 ditto
6139 War memorial	0 ditto
7108 Noticeboards	0 ditto
3111 CC rates & services	33000 estimate incl inflation uprate
3116 CC upkeep & cleaning	13200 estimate incl inflation uprate
3127 Drinks machine	770 estimate incl inflation uprate
3136 CC enhancement	0 remove to nominated reserves
3304 VotG non-youth equipment	500 contingency figure
3305 VotG running costs	4000 estimate on current year
2314 Streetlights - power	6600 estimate incl inflation uprate
2336 Streetlights	8250 estimate incl inflation uprate
<b>TOTAL P&amp;A EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>66320</b>
<b>(= approx 112% of 2022-23 figure but includes streetlights)</b>	

AMENITIES & SERVICES INCOME	
1180 Allotment rents	1750 small increase from divided plots
1280 VG hire	750 held at previous level
1281 VG utilities	0 not now income source
6180 Burial fees	13000 estimate on current year
1400 Am'ts grants & donations	1500 estimate of potential
<b>TOTAL A&amp;S INCOME</b>	<b>17000</b>
(= approx 97% of 2022-23 figure)	

AMENITIES & SERVICES EXPENDITURE	
1135 Allotment upkeep	700 estimate incl inflation uprate
1236 Outdoor maintenance	8000 estimate incl inflation uprate
1237 Outdoor planting	1000 estimate on current year
1501 Outdoor equipment	1705 estimate incl inflation uprate
1239 VG utilities	100 estimate on 3-year average
1436 Skate & play areas	1500 estimate on 3-year average
1447 Dog waste	3200 estimate incl inflation uprate
6123 Cemetery admin	330 estimate incl inflation uprate
6151 Cemetery rates	1210 estimate incl inflation uprate
<b>TOTAL A&amp;S (new codes)</b>	<b>17745</b>
(= approx 119% of 2023-24 figure)	

COMM. SERVICES	
2578 Medical transport income	300 unchanged
2905 New service income	2000 assumes new income
3184 Market income	9000 estimate on current year
3480 Gages sales	20000 unchanged
3680 Th. Club subscriptions	400 unchanged
4676 Youth grants/subscriptions	2500 estimate on current year
<b>TOTAL C-S INCOME</b>	<b>34200</b>
(= approx 103% of 2022-23 figure)	

C/S EXPENDITURE	
2554 Wealdlink	1000 assumes unchanged
2601 Medical car scheme	200 assumes unchanged
Emergency supplies	6000 new code
2700 Service development	4000 includes 'Shed project' startup costs
3151 Market expenses	1430 estimate on current year
3436 Gages equipment	2200 assumes new oven required
3460 Gages food	13200 estimate incl inflation uprate
3636 Thursday Club costs	1100 estimate on current year
4603 Youth expenses	3500 unchanged
2436 Road safety	750 estimate on current year
<b>TOTAL C-S EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>33380</b>
(=approx 116% of 2022-23)	

<b>TOTAL INCOME (pre-precept):</b>	<b>106455</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>563715</b>
<b>UNIT</b>	<b>option A</b>	<b>option B</b>	<b>option A</b>
			<b>option B</b>
			<b>precept=</b>
			<b>precept=</b>
{2022-23: total income: 104885/ total expend: 518885 / shortfall: 414000}			

## SECOND REVISED NOTE ON THE PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET FOR 2023-2024

**Note:** This Note amends and replaces the *First Note on the Budget* dated 31<sup>st</sup> October, which was circulated to all Members with first drafts on that date, and also the *Revised Note on the Budget*, dated 7<sup>th</sup> December which was supplied to the Committee Chairs before the Star Chamber meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> December, and incorporates the outcomes of that meeting.

The preliminaries set out in the *First Note* still apply:

1. The cost-of-living crisis still applies. Inflation is still hovering around 10%, making many goods & services more expensive, and imposing financial constraints on individuals.
2. The local authority pay rise for 2022-23 has been implemented and had a major effect on our budget. There is also the following year to consider, in a climate where public sector workers are pressing hard for pay to keep in touch with inflation.
3. Although the budget will be set by this Council, it will largely apply to the activities of the *next* Council after the May election. That Council may (or may not) be differently constituted, and may have different priorities. It is a constitutional convention that an outgoing administration should not tie the hands of a successor. This applies not only to major policy decisions, but also that an outgoing administration should not restrict the resources available to its successor in a way that would significantly prevent it from developing new initiatives.

The draft budget has therefore been based on the following principles:

1. Income forecasts are largely based on this year's performance and conservatively calculated. No increase in hire rates has been factored in, and no allowance is made for any grant income. [I have also continued to include nominal income & expense figures for the market, pending a decision on its future format].
2. We should factor in two contingencies to allow for a new council taking a proactive stance on community services. On the one hand, notwithstanding the ideal that services should become substantially self-supporting, initial seed funding will almost always be needed. My proposal is therefore that this should be met by an increase in cost code 2700 (renamed "service development") from £3,000 to £4,000. On the other hand, provision should be made for the costs of emergency equipment which the Council can provide to residents in need: the Chair of Community Services has drawn up a list for which the budget (not necessarily to be fully disbursed) should be under a new cost code at £6,000.
3. We should also factor in an inflation allowance. A general 10% increase in all expenditure would produce an unacceptably high budget of well over £600,000, and include some items clearly within our control to adjust. But the budget should be increased by 10% against critical supplies and services which we cannot easily control. We could factor in a lower rate, but our revenue is fixed for twelve months ahead, and it would be imprudent to bet on the rate of inflation reducing substantially over the next year.
4. This year's pay award having come within the financial year will have to come from reserves this year, and the deficiency be made good next year. In addition a 5% allowance against a 2023-24 staff pay rise would be appropriate. This comes to a total of £348, 449.
5. At this point there was a divergence between the Committee Chairs at the Star Chamber meeting. My advice was that in addition to the 5% allowance mentioned above, there ought to be an allowance for contingencies during the next financial year, not excluding the possibility of employing an additional staff member, and I therefore proposed that the staff costs budget should be raised from the figure envisaged above to a total of £375,000.

6. However, certain Members felt that this was too high a figure, and that a contingency of 5% only should be added, giving an approximate total of £365,000. In the absence of agreement I have drafted the consolidated budget with two options: option A with a salaries allowance of £375,000 and option B with an allowance of £365,000.
7. Following adjustments to the A&S budget by the Committee, and a correction of some double-counting in the salaries budget, this results in a total expenditure forecast of £563,715 (option A) or £553,715 (option B), an overall increase of 8.64% or 6.7% over last year, a shortfall on revenue before precept of £457,260 (option A) or £447,260 (option B).
8. That latter figure would result in a 10.2% increase on this year's precept. I noted at budget time last year that restricting the precept to the previous year's figure would inevitably mean a higher rate this year, and external economics have clearly made things worse. We can mitigate the effect by removing the £1000 stand-by elections reserve, since we have increased the corresponding revenue code to £4000 in view of the May 2023 election.
9. This gives the following final figures:

	Option A	Option B
Budgeted adjusted expenditure:	<u>£563,715</u>	<u>£553,715</u>
Budgeted operational income for 2023-24:	£106,455	£106,455
Transfers from reserves:	£ <u>1,000</u>	£ <u>1,000</u>
Shortfall before precept:	<u>£456,260</u>	<u>£446,260</u>
Proposed precept:	£456,000	£446,000

10. This represents a 9.8% / 7.5% precept increase on last year. But percentages are misleading: the "only 5%" allowed to principal authorities is a percentage of many millions, while the Parish share of the Council tax bill is only 4% (and £60 less than the police precept last year). In money terms, therefore, the increase under option A amounts to £18.20 for the year for each taxable household, or 35 *pence* per week, and under option B £13.75 for the year, or 26 *pence* per week.

Obviously, no one likes to see their tax burden increase. But the Parish Council is not exempt from the same inflationary pressures as every other public organisation. And if it is to continue to provide targeted services to the local community (and what is the point of the organisation if it does not?), it has to be properly funded by that same community.

The above strategy, while it pegs the precept increase just below the current inflation rate, is not without risk. It does not allow for any increase in nominated reserves (though I am hopeful of running a small surplus on this year's revenue budget from which the reserves can benefit). It also allows only a minimum for inflation uprating, and it will impose some constraints on the incoming Council in May. But it represents a positive compromise position which hopefully will commend itself to Council for approval.

David O'Driscoll  
Parish Clerk/ RFO  
22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022



## **COMMUNITY WARDEN**

### **JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Title:** Community Warden  
**Reporting to:** The Council via the Parish Clerk  
**Place of work:** Forest Row Community Centre Office and outreach work in the community  
**Hours:** Full time 37 hours per week within the hours of 8am - 11 pm on a flexible hours system as agreed and as required by the needs of the community.  
**Job purpose:** To enhance community safety for residents, visitors & businesses, through the delivery of community safety advice, education, intelligence and support.

#### **PRINCIPAL DUTIES:**

1. patrolling the community, providing a visible presence of the Council on the street and a reassuring presence to deter anti-social behaviour;
2. offering targeted support to vulnerable members of the community, building relationships to respond to their needs, and including installation of crime prevention measures;
3. working with all members of the community to promote and encourage social inclusion, reducing the fear of crime by establishing trust and overcoming difficulties;
4. monitoring the area for fly-tipping, graffiti, defects in highways and rights of way, incidents of vandalism and the condition of play spaces;
5. working with community stakeholders including the District/County Councils, emergency services, social landlords, sheltered accommodation providers & community organisations;
6. reporting to the Council through the Clerk and attending Council meetings to update Members as required.

#### **PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. an impeccable personal record, including enhanced DBS clearance;
2. physical fitness and a willingness to work outdoors, often alone;
3. smart appearance, and a willingness to work in uniform (provided);
4. the ability to communicate with people from different backgrounds including ethnic, social and professional, and respect a widely diverse community;
5. a problem-solving approach and the ability to show initiative, sometimes in challenging situations;
6. an awareness of health & safety guidelines and ability to deal with hazards appropriately;
7. basic IT literacy and the ability to provide reports in clear and concise language;
8. it is desirable to have a full UK driving licence and helpful to have previous experience of working in a community safety environment.

## THE ROLE OF THE WARDEN: THE WARDEN'S OWN VIEW (FULL COUNCIL 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2023)

I see the warden's role as an integral part of the life of the community, helping residents out with various concerns, directly if possible, or by signposting them to the agencies they require to help resolve their issues.

The warden does not have police powers, but works closely with the police to benefit the community. It is over-optimistic to think that Forest Row will ever return to having a dedicated officer. That may have been promised when the new police station at Crowborough opened last year, but already the six planned PCSO's have been cut back (and at one point there was only one PCSO and a sergeant in Crowborough for the whole of North Wealden).

However, the warden can keep a targeted local eye on any criminal behaviour and liaise with the police directly, supplying information and contacts to assist with investigations, which might otherwise go unreported. [This happened only last week when a vehicle damaged property and drove off without giving details. By making enquiries I was able to get the vehicle registration number. I passed this to the police who will investigate the matter as an offence, as well as facilitating an insurance claim].

Inconsiderate parking and driving are also a regular concern and the fact that the warden is in uniform makes it easier to address offenders directly and persuade them to change their behaviour.

The warden can also advise residents how and when to report concerns about potential crimes or anti-social behaviour. Regular contact with retailers in the village has also been a significant help in dealing with theft and the passing of counterfeit banknotes.

But a major part of the role is monitoring and reporting environmental issues such as potholes, water and gas leaks, damage to street furniture etc. This enables remedial action to be taken more quickly than is the case with issues reported by private individuals, as the warden can liaise directly with utility managers to get problems resolved.

It is obviously very difficult to *prove* that having a warden reduces offending or anti-social behaviour, as it is trying to show a positive from a negative. But anecdotally, having a visible uniformed presence does serve as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour and theft, and makes the village a safer place.