

Forest Row Parish Council

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



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

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Dear Sir/Madam,
Your attendance is required at an extra-ordinary meeting
of the FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL to be held on
TUESDAY 24th SEPTEMBER 2024 in the Garden Room
at the Community Centre at **7.30 PM**.

Date: 18th September 2024

cc 
Mr David O'Driscoll
Clerk to Forest Row Parish Council

THE FIRST FIFTEEN MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE FOR QUESTIONS AND REMARKS FROM THE PUBLIC.
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 30th JULY 2024
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS/DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR THIS MEETING
5. DELEGATED DECISIONS

REPORTS

6. CHAIR'S COMMENTS
7. CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION
8. FINANCIAL REPORT
9. PRINCIPAL COUNCILS
10. STANDING COMMITTEES
11. WORKING GROUPS
12. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION

13. SHORT, MEDIUM & LONG TERM PRIORITIES PAPER
14. WORKING GROUPS:
 - a) IDENTITY, STATUS AND REMITS
 - b) REVISION OF THE WORKING GROUPS STANDING ORDER
15. AN AUTUMN 'COUNCIL RETREAT'?
16. A COMMON EMAIL PLATFORM FOR FRPC?
17. THE SPACE BEHIND PETER GRIFFITS HALL
18. SUPPORT FOR LOCAL ARTISTS
19. TABLEHURST FARM FUNDING REQUEST
20. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

**COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING FOR THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL
ON 24th SEPTEMBER 2024**

1. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
3. **RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF 30th JULY 2024**
4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/ 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**
ACTION: to note & approve

REPORTS TO NOTE

6. **CHAIR'S COMMENTS**
7. **CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION**
 - 7.1 Vacancy As you know, Edouard Hugo resigned from the Council on 10th September. I have informed the Elections Department, and the Notice of Vacancy has been published. We now have to wait until 8th October to see if ten electors require a formal by-election. If that does not happen, we will again advertise for co-option. I have already indicated (email of 17/09) the potential effect of further resignations on the General Power of Competence.
 - 7.2 Finances I recently circulated the end-of-audit certificate for 2023-24. Amazingly, we are now at the start of next year's budget process, and hopefully by the time of this meeting I will have circulated the first set of papers for your attention. Can I please urge you to engage actively with the process: too often in previous years, Members have brought forward ideas when it is too late to incorporate them satisfactorily.
 - 7.3 Facilities decisions If you have not yet had a change to read the minutes of the last meeting, I would highlight the following:
 - Committee resolved to replace the ageing swing installation at the Rush Green playpark with a 3-bay replacement incorporating accessible seats for children with disabilities. [It turns out the existing roundabout is already wheelchair accessible]
 - There was extensive discussion about how the community consultation should proceed over the cemetery extension issue. *Action in Rural Sussex* will be responsible for the postal survey, but this will need backing up with information events in the village
 - 7.4 The litter & pavement project. I am still in negotiation with Wealden to see if they are prepared to cooperate and/or part-fund this project. I previously asked Members to send me photos of poorly kept pavements, and overflowing (Wealden) bins, but this seems to have dried up. Evidence is critical, if I could please repeat my request.
 - 7.5 Leases. The 7-year library rooms lease to ESCC is almost ready for signature, as is the 5-year Acupuncture Room lease. Heads of Terms have been agreed with *On My Side* for the Hambro Hall, but the lease terms for the football field are yet to be agreed.

8. FINANCIAL REPORT

I attach a printout of current income and expenditure. In the light of the pre-budget papers being circulated, this probably requires little comment.

- For Finance & Policy, at the close of month 5 (August), nominal performance against forecast should be 41.7%. In practice income is running at 50.2% (or 41.9% when the precept figure is corrected to 5 months' receipt), so almost exactly on target). Expenditure is 37.3%, slightly under forecast.
- For Facilities, At the end of month 5, nominal performance against forecast should be about 41.7%. Actual income is healthy at 76.5%, but expenditure is running at 53.9%, and care will be needed on both sides of the account during the balance of the year.
- For Community Services, the current performance against forecast (nominally 41.7% at the end of month 5) is currently running at 45.5% for income, but only 30.2% for expenditure, which perhaps reflects the fact that discussion and planning of new services has been more in evidence than actual delivery.

9. PRINCIPAL COUNCILS

County/District Councillors have been invited to attend and report on any relevant matters. County Cllr Galley has given apologies due to a prior commitment.

10. STANDING COMMITTEES

The Chairs of Committees have been invited to report on progress, current projects and future plans. However, following the resignation of Edouard Higo, Facilities is currently without a Chair.

11. WORKING GROUPS

I have invited a designated spokesperson from the active working groups to provide a conspectus of what they are (or are not) currently doing.

12. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Representatives from the above may report orally on any current matters. This includes the 'Community Energy Group' of which Cllr Christie is a significant member.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION/ DECISION

13. SHORT, MEDIUM & LONG TERM PRIORITIES PAPER

On 4th June, we had an informal meeting to discuss 'strategy and prioritisation', chaired by Edouard Hugo. I had been urging Council for some time to develop a strategy with respect to service development, to avoid a 'scattergun approach' which might be based purely on the loudest voices, and to organise the disparate ideas emerging from various different Council events into a coherent programme. This was endorsed by various Councillor interventions, for example:

"We need both approaches: working with the community and helping their ideas come to fruition alongside putting forward some longer term ideas/suggestions for the community to get on side with or argue against. We are full of ideas and were elected because we said we'd listen to people but also because people liked our fresh energy and ideas. So in summary we put forward our long term ideas to give the community something to think about. We also continue to do the brilliant work we're doing ... gathering community thoughts on possible ideas. "

In the course of that meeting, the Chair asked everyone to submit their ideas for prioritising ideas into short, medium and long term, and following that on 6th August he issued a composite document (copy attached) with the following comment:

"Here's the initial priorities document I compiled from received responses. This is to be considered over August, suggestions and adjustments made, and I'll come back with a more polished document incorporating said suggestions at the next Full Council meeting."

That now falls to be considered by Council, which the Chair will lead. I simply add the rider that this process is not anti-democratic: we live in a *representative* democracy where, in its simplest terms, "the people choose governing officials through elections to deliberate and decide legislation".

ACTION: to consider & resolve as necessary

14. WORKING GROUPS

On 3rd September I circulated a note to all Councillors on the issue of working groups and I attach the text to your papers to avoid repetition. This has led to various exchanges of, and I have included it on this agenda so that the issue can be clarified in the public forum.

14.1 The following are currently recognised Council working groups:

Planning / Outreach & Comms / Discovery / Youth Forum / Road Safety / Community Centre refurbishment / Shed project / 'Festival Corner' / Christmas Celebration.

[Technically, the Flood Action Group is also extant, though it has not met since the pandemic. I am not sure about the status of the 'Gleeson land group'.]

As far as I am aware, all the groups in the first list have been agreed by Council, their remits have been identified and their membership (subject to any necessary additions & subtractions) noted. If anyone dissents, "speak now or forever hold your peace", as they say.

I suggest for clarity a formal resolution on the identity of the current groups, to include clarification of the 'Gleeson land group'.

That leaves the issue of the '3-D model'. As far as I have been aware, all the business of organising the 3-D model event was under the auspices of *Outreach & Comms*, which is perfectly fine. But it has not so far, in my view, been constituted as a separate group. If a further 3-D event is definitely planned, can I therefore suggest that Council decides at this meeting, whether it is going to be a separate working group and if so, recognises its remit and membership.

Please also – for clarity's sake - do not refer to 'micro-groups'. If a restricted membership of any working group need to meet for any purpose that is fine, but please be clear that it is what it is and not independent of its home group.

14.2 The formulation in Standing Orders is OK as far as it goes, but needs tidying up so everyone is clear for the future. There is some time pressure now to get these papers published, so my proposal is that I bring to the meeting a revamped wording of S/O4(f) for discussion and resolution.

ACTION: to resolve accordingly

15. AN AUTUMN 'COUNCIL RETREAT' ?

This was mooted "for future consideration" at the Full Council of 30th July in the following terms: "a strategic review should take place in the Autumn which could be in the form of a 'retreat' or a meeting of the Discovery Group". A decision is required, to include outline organisation, content and funding.

ACTION: to resolve accordingly

16. A COMMON EMAIL PLATFORM FOR FRPC?

We are now being officially encouraged to develop a homogeneous system for Council communications (and the Government has been sponsoring an organisation to promote the use of 'gov.uk' – please see attached email). The Chair will speak to this issue

ACTION: to consider and resolve as appropriate

17. THE SPACE BEHIND PETER GRIFFITS HALL

This item is included at the request of Cllr Christie. It may more properly be considered by Facilities, but that Committed does not now meet until November, and there are issues to be considered

ACTION: to consider and resolve as appropriate

18. SUPPORT FOR LOCAL ARTISTS

This was raised by the Chair as an 'item for future consideration' at the conclusion of the Committee meeting of 10th September. Council may wish to defer it to Finance & Policy, but it does have potential budget implications.

ACTION: to consider and resolve as appropriate

19. TABLEHURST FARM FUNDING REQUEST

Tablehurst Farm has asked the Council for financial assistance in purchasing farm transport, please see attached link: <https://www.tablehurstfarm.org.uk/donate>. They have been asked to submit a grant application and a representative will be attending the meeting.

ACTION: to consider and resolve as appropriate

20. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 18/09/2024

Month No: 6

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
Finance & Policy						
401 Finance & Administration						
4176 FI-Precept Received	325,000	650,000	325,000			50.0%
4181 FI-Wayleave Income	1	5	4			20.0%
4182 FI-Devolved Services Income	794	1,450	656			54.7%
4190 FI-Interest Received	3,821	5,000	1,179			76.4%
Finance & Administration :- Income	329,616	656,455	326,839			50.2%
4101 FI-Salaries	157,020	418,700	261,680		261,680	37.5%
4102 FI-Payroll Outsource Costs	220	800	580		580	27.5%
4103 FI-Contrib. to Library Salary	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0%
4105 Community services - developme	172	0	(172)		(172)	0.0%
4108 FI-Staff Training/Travel	185	1,000	815		815	18.5%
4110 Community Warden Costs	169	0	(169)		(169)	0.0%
4111 Forest Rate	0	30	30		30	0.0%
4120 Postage	220	300	80		80	73.3%
4121 Telecommunications	4,309	7,700	3,391		3,391	56.0%
4123 Stationery	315	450	135		135	70.1%
4124 FI-Subscriptions	4,115	6,600	2,485		2,485	62.3%
4125 FI-Insurance	10,084	11,000	916		916	91.7%
4126 Printer/copier	1,926	4,400	2,474		2,474	43.8%
4133 FI-Chairman's Fund	0	250	250		250	0.0%
4134 FI-Parish Meeting	0	200	200		200	0.0%
4135 FI-Councillors Training/Travel	428	2,000	1,572		1,572	21.4%
4136 Security Checks	12	150	138		138	7.9%
4137 FI-Members Allowances	986	7,000	6,014		6,014	14.1%
4151 FI - Bank Charges	755	1,800	1,045		1,045	41.9%
4156 FI-Legal & professional fees	2,310	3,500	1,190		1,190	66.0%
4157 FI-Audit & Financial Managemen	4,088	4,000	(88)		(88)	102.2%
4158 FI-Van Lease	0	300	300		300	0.0%
4160 Office Equipment	628	500	(128)		(128)	125.5%
4161 Office Maintenance	0	500	500		500	0.0%
4165 FI-Election Fund	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%
4166 Wayleaves	1	10	9		9	14.5%
4169 Community Occasion	236	1,000	764		764	23.6%
7101 PR- Advertising/Publicity	115	1,500	1,385		1,385	7.7%
7102 PR-Website	720	1,000	280		280	72.0%
7110 PR-Newsletter & Distribution	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%
7113 PWLB Repayment	0	10,000	10,000		10,000	0.0%
Finance & Administration :- Indirect Expenditure	189,015	492,690	303,675	0	303,675	38.4%
Net Income over Expenditure	140,601	163,765	23,164			

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 18/09/2024

Month No: 6

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
403 Other Grants						
4360 Other Grants	1,550	17,500	15,950		15,950	8.9%
Other Grants :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>1,550</u>	<u>17,500</u>	<u>15,950</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15,950</u>	<u>8.9%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(1,550)</u>	<u>(17,500)</u>	<u>(15,950)</u>			
Finance & Policy :- Income	329,616	656,455	326,839			50.2%
Expenditure	<u>190,565</u>	<u>510,190</u>	<u>319,625</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>319,625</u>	<u>37.4%</u>
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>139,051</u>					
<u>Amenities & Services</u>						
101 Allotments						
1180 Allotment Rents	391	2,000	1,609			19.5%
Allotments :- Income	<u>391</u>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>1,609</u>			<u>19.5%</u>
1135 Allotments-Water & Upkeep	993	700	(293)		(293)	141.9%
Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>993</u>	<u>700</u>	<u>(293)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(293)</u>	<u>141.9%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(602)</u>	<u>1,300</u>	<u>1,902</u>			
102 Village Greens						
1280 VG-Hire Income	875	750	(125)			116.7%
3188 Grants & Donations	0	100	100			0.0%
Village Greens :- Income	<u>875</u>	<u>850</u>	<u>(25)</u>			<u>102.9%</u>
1236 Outdoor Maintenance	1,931	20,000	18,069		18,069	9.7%
1237 Outdoor Planting	609	1,000	391		391	60.9%
1238 Street Cleaning / Litter	0	12,000	12,000		12,000	0.0%
1239 VG-Utilities	0	400	400		400	0.0%
Village Greens :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>2,540</u>	<u>33,400</u>	<u>30,860</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>30,860</u>	<u>7.6%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(1,665)</u>	<u>(32,550)</u>	<u>(30,885)</u>			
104 Amenities General						
1400 Amenities grants/donations	0	1,000	1,000			0.0%
Amenities General :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>			<u>0.0%</u>
1436 Skate & Play areas	241	18,000	17,759		17,759	1.3%
1447 Dog Fouling	858	3,500	2,642		2,642	24.5%
Amenities General :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>1,099</u>	<u>21,500</u>	<u>20,401</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>20,401</u>	<u>5.1%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(1,099)</u>	<u>(20,500)</u>	<u>(19,401)</u>			

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 18/09/2024

Month No: 6

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
105 Outdoor Maintenance						
1501 Outdoor Maintenance Equipment	553	2,500	1,947		1,947	22.1%
Outdoor Maintenance :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>553</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>1,947</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,947</u>	<u>22.1%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(553)</u>	<u>(2,500)</u>	<u>(1,947)</u>			
203 Street Lighting						
2314 SL-Power	2,462	6,600	4,138		4,138	37.3%
2336 Streetlights	7,940	20,000	12,060		12,060	39.7%
Street Lighting :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>10,403</u>	<u>26,600</u>	<u>16,197</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>16,197</u>	<u>39.1%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(10,403)</u>	<u>(26,600)</u>	<u>(16,197)</u>			
204 Road Safety						
2436 RS-Road Safety	0	1,500	1,500		1,500	0.0%
2440 Shed Project	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%
Road Safety :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>3,500</u>	<u>3,500</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,500</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>(3,500)</u>	<u>(3,500)</u>			
601 Cemetery						
6180 BU-Burial Fees	6,241	18,000	11,759			34.7%
Cemetery :- Income	<u>6,241</u>	<u>18,000</u>	<u>11,759</u>			<u>34.7%</u>
6123 Cemetery Admin	412	350	(62)		(62)	117.7%
6151 BU- Cemetery Rates	1,480	1,200	(280)		(280)	123.4%
6152 BU-Memorial Repairs	116	0	(116)		(116)	0.0%
Cemetery :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>2,008</u>	<u>1,550</u>	<u>(458)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(458)</u>	<u>129.5%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>4,233</u>	<u>16,450</u>	<u>12,217</u>			
Amenities & Services :- Income	<u>7,506</u>	<u>21,850</u>	<u>14,344</u>			<u>34.4%</u>
Expenditure	<u>17,595</u>	<u>89,750</u>	<u>72,155</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>72,155</u>	<u>19.6%</u>
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(10,089)</u>					
Property & Assets						
205 Miscellaneous Assets						
1439 Public Seats	1,364	0	(1,364)		(1,364)	0.0%
Miscellaneous Assets :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>1,364</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,364)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,364)</u>	
Net Expenditure	<u>(1,364)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,364</u>			

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 18/09/2024

Month No: 6

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
301 Community Centre						
3180 CC-Lettings	15,792	20,000	4,208			79.0%
3181 CC-Equipment Hire	717	400	(317)			179.4%
3182 CC-Rents	7,963	22,000	14,037			36.2%
3185 MISC - incl books/copying)	320	400	80			80.1%
3187 CC Drinks Machine Income	249	600	351			41.5%
3189 Misc Property Refunds	18,600	0	(18,600)			0.0%
4180 Misc Income	98	0	(98)			0.0%
Community Centre :- Income	43,740	43,400	(340)			100.8%
3108 CC-Staff Training	120	0	(120)		(120)	0.0%
3111 CC-Rates & Services	20,794	65,000	44,206		44,206	32.0%
3116 CC-Upkeep/Cleaning	29,851	0	(29,851)		(29,851)	0.0%
3127 CC - Drinks Machine	611	1,000	389		389	61.1%
3136 CC-Enhancement	19,902	5,000	(14,902)		(14,902)	398.0%
Community Centre :- Indirect Expenditure	71,278	71,000	(278)	0	(278)	100.4%
Net Income over Expenditure	(27,538)	(27,600)	(62)			
303 Venue on the Green						
3306 VOTG Income	352	2,200	1,848			16.0%
Venue on the Green :- Income	352	2,200	1,848			16.0%
3304 Votg Non Youth Equip	0	500	500		500	0.0%
3305 VOTG Running Costs	2,807	4,000	1,193		1,193	70.2%
Venue on the Green :- Indirect Expenditure	2,807	4,500	1,693	0	1,693	62.4%
Net Income over Expenditure	(2,455)	(2,300)	155			
Property & Assets :- Income	44,092	45,600	1,508			96.7%
Expenditure	75,449	75,500	51	0	51	99.9%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(31,357)					
Localism & Community Projects						
206 Community Transport						
2678 Medical Car Scheme Income	67	300	233			22.3%
Community Transport :- Income	67	300	233			22.3%
2554 Wealdlink	264	1,200	936		936	22.0%
2601 Voluntary Medical Car Service	69	50	(19)		(19)	137.0%
Community Transport :- Indirect Expenditure	333	1,250	918	0	918	26.6%
Net Income over Expenditure	(266)	(950)	(685)			

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 18/09/2024

Month No: 6

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>207 Market</u>						
3184 CC-Market Income	3,748	7,500	3,753			50.0%
Market :- Income	<u>3,748</u>	<u>7,500</u>	<u>3,753</u>			<u>50.0%</u>
3151 CC-Market expenditure	4,213	7,000	2,787		2,787	60.2%
Market :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>4,213</u>	<u>7,000</u>	<u>2,787</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,787</u>	<u>60.2%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(466)</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>966</u>			
<u>209 Localism & Community Proj Misc</u>						
2905 Repair Cafe & Wellbeing Servic	0	500	500			0.0%
Localism & Community Proj Misc :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>			<u>0.0%</u>
2700 Repair Cafe & Wellbeing	725	2,000	1,275		1,275	36.3%
2710 Environmental Support	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%
2715 Community Consultation	0	2,500	2,500		2,500	0.0%
2720 Capital Projects R & D	57	2,500	2,443		2,443	2.3%
2750 YOUTH FORUM	730	0	(730)		(730)	0.0%
Localism & Community Proj Misc :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>1,512</u>	<u>8,000</u>	<u>6,488</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6,488</u>	<u>18.9%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(1,512)</u>	<u>(7,500)</u>	<u>(5,988)</u>			
<u>304 Cafe</u>						
3480 Gages - Sales	10,697	22,000	11,303			48.6%
Cafe :- Income	<u>10,697</u>	<u>22,000</u>	<u>11,303</u>			<u>48.6%</u>
3436 Gages-Purchase of Equipment	343	2,000	1,657		1,657	17.1%
3460 Gages -Purchases Food etc	5,733	18,000	12,267		12,267	31.8%
Cafe :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>6,075</u>	<u>20,000</u>	<u>13,925</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>13,925</u>	<u>30.4%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>4,621</u>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>(2,621)</u>			
<u>306 Thursday Club</u>						
3680 TC-Subscriptions	92	200	108			46.0%
Thursday Club :- Income	<u>92</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>108</u>			<u>46.0%</u>
3636 TC-Running Costs	0	750	750		750	0.0%
Thursday Club :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>92</u>	<u>(550)</u>	<u>(642)</u>			

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 18/09/2024

Month No: 6

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
406 Youth Provision						
4676 YP-Grants & Other Income	402	2,500	2,098			16.1%
Youth Provision :- Income	<u>402</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>2,098</u>			<u>16.1%</u>
4603 YP - Dev costs & General Expen	916	3,500	2,584		2,584	26.2%
4604 YP - Youth Forum	0	500	500		500	0.0%
Youth Provision :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>916</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>3,084</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,084</u>	<u>22.9%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(513)</u>	<u>(1,500)</u>	<u>(987)</u>			
Localism & Community Projects :- Income	15,005	33,000	17,995			45.5%
Expenditure	<u>13,049</u>	<u>41,000</u>	<u>27,951</u>	0	27,951	31.8%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>1,957</u>					
Grand Totals:- Income	396,220	756,905	360,685			52.3%
Expenditure	<u>296,659</u>	<u>716,440</u>	<u>419,781</u>	0	419,781	41.4%
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>99,561</u>	<u>40,465</u>	<u>(59,096)</u>			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>99,561</u>					

Strategy and Priorities

This is an amalgamated proposal utilising responses from councillors alongside community feedback we have had from a variety of outreach events. All councillor priorities are attached as a separate page to ensure transparency in how I have pulled the following together.

There is no apparent central theme to short time priorities amongst the residents of the village or its councillors, which is no surprise given these are present issues rather than general broader themes. Ideas received from councillors all stand on their own and might well be considered by committees.

In the medium- and long-term priorities of the councillors and residents of Forest Row, certain themes emerge that we might pin long term plans to. Whilst I detail each point a little more later, broad themes for medium- and long-term priorities are:

- A focus of village maintenance and accessibility
- A continued process of community engagement and information gathering
- A bias for action and decision-making in our roles as elected members
- Developing a local/village plan
- Ensuring a sustainable energy future for Forest Row

It is my opinion that the following medium-term priorities stand out:

Village maintenance and accessibility – Many requests and suggestions cover the topics of a degraded look and atmosphere in the village. There is a general desire for sustained maintenance of more of the village and improved accessibility throughout it. This includes the maintenance of manmade structures and paths alongside the protection of our natural spaces.

Council decision-making and community engagement – There are parallel themes of community engagement and continuing to build bridges with and between segments of our community, alongside a desire for action and swifter avenues to decisions. Thus, I recommend a strategy of ceaseless public engagement and information gathering, alongside an acknowledgement of our own position as elected decisionmakers and a bias for action.

Likewise, long term themes also stand out. These are ideas that may not be concluded within our tenure on the council, but may be of substantial benefit to the community if we initiate the first steps in the coming years:

A local plan – Many suggestions follow a theme of local coherence and a desire for a master plan both for ourselves and to be utilised when dealing with higher levels of council and other official bodies.

Renewable energy future – A theme of environmental concern and a desire for energy stability, and the utilisation of alternative and sustainable energy sources, is present through many suggestions. Requests cover reducing current energy usage to building renewable energy infrastructure and investing in the village's energy future.

Short term priorities:

Making sure the PC is on top of all the basics and checking whether any improvements can be made in those areas, for the benefit of the parish, eg environmentally (hanging baskets, Christmas decorations, traffic flow, etc), financially, community involvement, social care and cohesion, etc. The Shed and bus shelter are great examples.

Sorting out the cemetery situation.

providing support to the most disadvantaged members of the community

a project to support preschoolers and parents from low-income families after research into what is most needed and how to fund it.

Better sharing of info and comms between all councillors, the office and those in the Parish, I just don't feel like we are quite getting it right yet, there isn't one place or method of communication that works for everyone, hopefully the website and newsletter etc are the solution.

Improving our waste and recycling systems

Upgrading the pavements, particularly Hartfield Road/ 'centre' of the village, to enable accessibility for all and to improve the look and feel of the village. I was told last week that a young man who was brought up here, visited the other month and reported that FR sadly now looks 'grimey'. (A dismal review!)

Gleeson Land

Marking the centre of the village at the village hall

Medium term priorities:

Housing strategy. Looking at how to make it easier for local people to find housing, both in terms of creating new housing (a local - PC - housing association?) and, perhaps, a local rental scheme (eg a fair rent commitment).

Looking at potential additional income possibilities for the PC, to alleviate the strain of the precept portion on the council tax and /or make it more feasible for the PC to invest in capital projects.

improving democratic engagement within the community - a democratic engagement project with the aim of improving voter participation of all age groups in the community, and understanding of and engagement with local government.

We need to keep making decisions and implementing them, even if they end up being wrong i still think it's better, we try to improve things and remember the idea of saying yes rather than no. I know when spending money this can make things difficult but we have lost a little of our very positive can do attitude and i would love to get this back.

Working to create a physical centre place for the community to gather, this is in essence the village green and I'm keen to see this as a place for all i.e. communication, events, variety, relaxation, connection, etc

Renovating the community centre so that it feels dynamic, interactive, warm and inviting, with beautiful colours and furnishings.

Festival Corner/Signposting in and around the village

A masterplan for the village

Long term priorities:

Devolution - streamlining services and maintenance in the parish by taking over responsibility and funding for them from principal councils.

Becoming a net zero parish. Reinstating the railway, virtually eliminating road traffic and, once we've succeeded here: world domination!

making the community environmentally sustainable

council led community energy project, composting project, community food garden, tree planting (brownfield) site, affordable eco housing, chemical free council policy, library of things, take away packaging reduction initiative, campaigning for better bins, community support of Ashdown Forest bracken bashing, community weeding days... sorry I know I need to pick one thing to focus on but I can't choose!

To keep encouraging people (regardless of them agreeing with our direction or not) to contribute to the community in some way, it doesn't matter if i am a councillor or not in the future as long as I am still encouraged to keep helping the community flourish and the methods will change so it's on us to be flexible but still open and welcoming to all.

Creating a visual and environmental 'personality' for our village i.e. shop fronts, the green, connecting all aspects of the village with synergy , support and communication between all the various groups together etc

To raise the profile of Forest Row, making it a 'centre', a hub for learning, education, sharing, community, where visitors from the UK and abroad, choose to visit and that there is an easy to use and accessible website where all the information on healers, services etc, are all held within one place.

Neighbourhood plan - that gives direction for the village from consultation with the village

a community investment fund underwritten by energy

Work at improving the physical environment of the village. By this I mean improving the way we look after the environment as it is at present, not adding endless 'clutter' from new schemes such as ideas for the Village Green (which by definition and legislation, is an empty green space for use of residents as they wish (within reason of course))

Continue to run the services which we offer at the moment which help support all our residents.

Continue to be a Council that respects it's community and wants to listen to people. (It is possible that not quite so much time and effort need to be expended on ways of listening via special events and models which can sometimes produce slightly unrepresentative views.....listening is a continuous and natural process.

Try our best to keep the precept down. It is not true that anyone struggling can easily get Council Tax benefit. It is not easy and has different problems for different age groups. I have 'been there' and done it in the past and there are difficulties. People suffer.

Excerpt from Clerk's 'All Councillor' email' 3rd September 2024

Standing Order 4(f) (and Scheme of Delegation sect. 8) says:

“Working Groups may be formed by resolution of the Council or a Committee at any time. The work of such a Working Group will be decided upon at the time it is formed by means of a Minute detailing the Terms of Reference. Each Working Group will report back with recommendations to the Council or the Committee that formed it. Appointment shall be as agreed at the time by elected members.”

Working groups, whether semi-permanent to deal with recurring activities, or ‘task-and-finish’, addressing individual short-term issues, are a useful procedural entity. They are not subject to the notice and quorum restrictions of committees, do not have to be open to the public, and can be flexible over membership and procedure to suit their remit. However, they do operate under the scrutiny of their appropriate committee, do not have the power to make decisions and can only spend such limited budgets as their supervising committee allocates. It is also a convention that the Clerk, Deputy Clerk (or if appropriate the Community Services Officer) should be a member. This discipline is absolutely necessary: they are still part of the local government authority and answerable to the council’s auditors and to the electorate.

Working groups have been a useful tool for this council, particularly as a way of finding creative solutions to new situations as they arise. Planning is now essentially a working group and functions well, Outreach & Comms, the Youth Forum and the Christmas Celebration group similarly. Discovery appears to be dormant, but the Shed project, the Community Centre refurbishment group, and the Festival Corner group are ready to go forward.

Let me be clear that I am not trying to restrict anyone’s freedom to think creatively and to discuss those thoughts in any private context they choose. The more the merrier. However, in the past week or so I have seen a couple of references to ‘micro-groups’ and the apparent creation of a working group which has not been discussed or authorised. Worthy though these initiatives may be, they are not and cannot be activities of Council, and we do need to be careful about blurred lines with respect to ongoing discussions, funding and the deployment of staff.

Carolyn Coomber

From: stephanie.palmer@digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk on behalf of Parish Helper <parish-helper@domains.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 September 2024 12:24
Subject: IMPORTANT: An update on funding and support for new .gov.uk domains

Hello

We are writing to you to let you know about some upcoming changes to the Parish Council Domains Helper Service and the availability of funding. Both of these may affect your future move to a [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domain.

- We have now allocated over 50% of our funding for this financial year, and we can confirm that it is highly unlikely that further funding will be available in future years
- The Parish Council Domains Helper Service in its current form - with online sessions, advice and guidance - will change. From March 2025, we expect that our service and support will become more online with a focus on self-help.

If you are still considering a move to a [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domain and would benefit from the funding and hands-on support available today, we would urge you to engage with the Parish Council Domains Helper Service sooner rather than later. You can do this by [signing up to one of our free, no obligation online sessions](#). Here, you'll find out more about a move to a [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domain, what the process involves and the kind of services and costs your council will need to consider. If you have already attended and have specific questions or challenges, we encourage you to [sign up to one of our drop in sessions](#).

As an aside, we are always interested to hear how parish councils are progressing with their move and would appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to tell us how you are getting on through this [short form](#). You can also use this to unsubscribe from our emails.

Should you have any questions then please reply to parish-helper@domains.gov.uk.

We hope to see you at one of our sessions soon.

Best wishes

The Parish Council Domains Helper Service Team