

Forest Row Parish Council

Clerk:
Email:

Mr David O'Driscoll
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(Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)



To: All members of FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL:
Cllrs. Eichner (Chair), Christie, Evans, Gilbert,
Jaffay, Killick, La Djoï, Lewis, Marshall, Matthews,
Rainbow, Scott, Summers, Volkers & A M Waters

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Dear Sir/Madam,
Your attendance is required at an **EXTRAORDINARY**
meeting of the FOREST ROW PARISH COUNCIL to be
held on **MONDAY 13TH APRIL 2026** in the Fred
Bishop Hall at the Community Centre at **7.30 PM**.

Date: 7TH April 2026

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. TO RESOLVE TO DEAL WITH THE RECORDS OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24TH FEBRUARY 2026
AT THE NEXT MEETING
4. TO RESOLVE TO CONSIDER THE ACTIONS FROM 24TH FEBRUARY 2026 AT THE NEXT MEETING
5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR THIS MEETING
6. TO CONSIDER THE REQUEST FROM THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE FOR USE OF THE
FOOTBALL FIELD FOR THIS YEAR'S FOREST ROW FESTIVAL
7. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

**COUNCILLORS' BRIEFING FOR THE EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL
TO BE HELD ON 13th APRIL 2026**

PRELIMINARIES

As is usual with an extra-ordinary meeting, the formal items will be deferred to the next ordinary meeting. This is a single-issue meeting, and it is expected that members of the Festival Organising Committee will be present to support their case. In order to keep the lines of discussion clear, Members are asked to address their remarks through the Chair and not engage in direct conversation with the Committee representatives.

6. TO CONSIDER THE REQUEST FROM THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE FOR USE OF THE FOOTBALL FIELD FOR THIS YEAR'S FOREST ROW FESTIVAL

It has been proposed to hold the Forest Row Festival this year from 19th– 1st June, and it is also proposed that the main event(s) should take place on the Football Field (otherwise known as 'The Back Field'), which is held by the Council under licence from the freeholders.

The Council received the Event Management Plan over the Easter weekend, together with four appendices: a Noise Management Plan / a Medical Plan / a Bar Management Plan / an Event Health and Safety Policy. Copies of these documents are attached, and Members should read at least the main document to acquaint themselves with what is proposed.

Without wishing to prejudice the discussion in any way, I would say that this appears to be an off-the-shelf plan, adapted to this event, but showing evidence of having been completed remotely without a prior personal visit to the village. The appendices show that independent expertise has been drafted in to deal with some of the more difficult technical requirements such as noise management, but there are certain general assumptions such as site capacity, the presence of adjacent watercourses, the catchment area for participants, and the perennial issue of anti-social episodes outside the main perimeter which have not been fully addressed.

The issue for the Council is not whether the siting of the Festival within the football field is within the terms of the licence: it is agreed by both the Council and the freeholders that it is. However, that is not the same as permission to use the location and the assertion on page 7 that permission to use the site has been granted is not correct. Several Councillors have already made representations that it would be better for 2026 to be a 'fallow year' while the identity and character of the Festival are reviewed.

The Council is in a difficult dilemma. If it refuses permission, it will doubtless be criticised for being 'killjoy' and over-cautious. If it agrees, and there are serious adverse incidents as there have been in past years, the Council may be blamed for not having taken legitimate objections into account. It is unfortunate that the critical decision has been applied for at relatively short notice from the proposed date, but that is what is now required.

ACTION: to decide as appropriate

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

As per usual