# Forest Row Parish Council

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

(Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

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

Date: 2 July, 2026

To: All members of the COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE:
Cllrs. Christie, Jaffay, Killick, Lewis, Marshall, Rainbow & Volkers

Dear Sir/Madam,
You are required to attend a meeting of the PEOPLE COMMITTEE to be held on **TUESDAY 7th JULY 2026 @ 7:30 pm in the Community Centre**

Mr David O'Driscoll
Clerk to Forest Row Parish Council

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR
2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.
3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS/ DISPENSATION REQUESTS
5. RECORDS OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24th MARCH 2026
6. REVIEW OF ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING
7. CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A DECISION
   - 7.1 Finance report
   - 7.2 Future Services?
8. REPORTS ON CURRENT SERVICES
   - 8.1 Gages
   - 8.2 Thursday Club
   - 8.3 Library volunteer service
   - 8.4 Youth service
   - 8.5 Sponsored low-cost counselling: report & request
9. MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMS/OUTREACH WORKING GROUP
   - 9.1 Costs for vertical advertising banners
   - 9.2 Cost of advertising in Ashdown Living
10. OTHER ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION/ DECISION
    - 10.1 The matter of art on Garden Room walls
11. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY FULL COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
BACKING PAPERS FOR MEETING 7th JULY 2026


| Agenda Item | Description | Page nos |
|---|---|---|
| | Clerk's briefing note | 1-2 |
| 6 | Annotated actions from previous meeting | 3 |
| 7.1 | Financial Report | 4-5 |
| 8.1 | Gages report | 6 |
| 8.2 | Thursday Club report | 7 |
| 8.3 | Library volunteer service report | 8 |
| 8.4 | Youth Service report | 9-10 |
| 8.5 | Low-cost counselling annual report & request | 11-12 |
| 9 | [Minutes from Comms & Outreach w/g of 19-05-26] | 13-14 |

**COUNCILLORS BRIEFING NOTE FOR THE MEETING**

**OF THE 'PEOPLE' COMMITTEE 7th JULY 2026**

**1-5** Standard items, no unusual difficulties foreseen.

**6. REVIEW OF ACTIONS** An annotated list is attached

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

7.1 Financial Report. The attached report is complete to the end of month 2, showing income at 17.7% and expenditure at 14.9% against a forecast of 16.7%. Both the market and Gages are sitting comfortably in balance, the only outlier at present is the low-cost counselling support code which is already 32% into its budget. I am hopeful of being able to supply month 3/ Q1 figures by the time of the meeting.

7.2 Future services This is by way of a comment rather than a report, but I reviewed the agenda and minutes from the last meeting in March and the agenda for this meeting, and there seems to be a distinct lack of substantive content. Time was when the 'Community Services Committee' agenda was as full as either 'Property' or 'Amenities', but it now seems to be mainly concerned with the maintenance of services which pre-existed this Council – the Market, Gages, Thursday Club, the Youth Service – and this Council's current initiatives all seem to be place-based.

To some extent this is due to the 'midwifing' of important areas of activity – to Frow Friends, the bike hire company, to Second Life, to the Shed. But it does also seem to mark a degree of retrenchment from some of the Council's earlier ambitions, and from some longer term 'big ticket' projects, all of which appeared in one form or another on the feedback from the 3D event, and in some cases from even earlier. As a *non-exhaustive* list that includes: low-cost community housing, a revived car club, a specific farmers' market, a community minibus, a periodic community skip, promotion of environmental initiatives, more community events sponsored by the Council.

Even granted that the term of this Council is now within its last nine months, are there any suggestions which Council feels should be revisited?

***ACTION: to note***

**8. REPORTS ON CURRENT SERVICES**

8.1-8.3 Gages, Thursday Club, Library volunteer service Reports attached

8.4 Youth service Report attached

## MEETING OF PEOPLE COMMITTEE
## HELD ON 24th MARCH 2026

| MINUTE NO. | DECISION | ACTION BY | PROGRESS<br>*To go out with next agenda* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 58/26 1 | 3D Event – 11th July 2026 – arrange | Councillors | Postponed until Septemjber |
| 58/26 2 | Volunteer Fair – contact organisations to take part | Office | Proposal withdrawn |
| 59/26 1 | Art Fund – feedback from Cllr. Eichner | Cllr. Eichner | Awaited |
| 59/26 2 | Cost of inclusion in Ashdown Living to be investigated | Office | Done |
| 59/26 2 | A4 sheet listing Council activities be compiled | Cllr. la Djoi & Office | In hand |
| 59/26 2 | Art on Garden Room walls – put on future agenda | Office | On agenda |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| | Actual Year To Date | Current Annual | Variance Annual | Committed Expenditure | Funds Available | % Spent | Transfer to/from EMR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Localism & Community Projects** | | | | | | | |
| 206 Community Transport | | | | | | | |
| 2678 Medical Car Scheme Income | 0 | 350 | 350 | | | 0.0% | |
| Community Transport :- Income | **0** | **350** | **350** | | | **0.0%** | **0** |
| 2554 Wealdlink | 283 | 1,200 | 917 | | 917 | 23.6% | |
| 2601 Voluntary Medical Car Service | 0 | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 0.0% | |
| Community Transport :- Indirect Expenditure | **283** | **1,300** | **1,017** | **0** | **1,017** | **21.8%** | **0** |
| **Net Income over Expenditure** | **(283)** | **(950)** | **(667)** | | | | |
| 207 Market | | | | | | | |
| 3184 CC-Market Income | 1,019 | 7,500 | 6,482 | | | 13.6% | |
| Market :- Income | **1,019** | **7,500** | **6,482** | | | **13.6%** | **0** |
| 3151 CC-Market expenditure | 1,606 | 10,000 | 8,394 | | 8,394 | 16.1% | |
| Market :- Indirect Expenditure | **1,606** | **10,000** | **8,394** | **0** | **8,394** | **16.1%** | **0** |
| **Net Income over Expenditure** | **(587)** | **(2,500)** | **(1,913)** | | | | |
| 209 Localism & Community Proj Misc | | | | | | | |
| 2905 Repair Cafe & Wellbeing Servic | 0 | 500 | 500 | | | 0.0% | |
| Localism & Community Proj Misc :- Income | **0** | **500** | **500** | | | **0.0%** | **0** |
| 2700 Repair Cafe & Wellbeing | 0 | 4,000 | 4,000 | | 4,000 | 0.0% | |
| 2705 Low Cost counselling | 1,760 | 5,500 | 3,740 | | 3,740 | 32.0% | |
| 2710 Environmental Support | 0 | 1,000 | 1,000 | | 1,000 | 0.0% | |
| 2715 Community Consultation | 0 | 6,000 | 6,000 | | 6,000 | 0.0% | |
| 2720 Capital Projects R & D | 0 | 500 | 500 | | 500 | 0.0% | |
| Localism & Community Proj Misc :- Indirect Expenditure | **1,760** | **17,000** | **15,240** | **0** | **15,240** | **10.4%** | **0** |
| **Net Income over Expenditure** | **(1,760)** | **(16,500)** | **(14,740)** | | | | |
| 304 Cafe | | | | | | | |
| 3480 Gages - Sales | 4,794 | 24,000 | 19,206 | | | 20.0% | |
| Cafe :- Income | **4,794** | **24,000** | **19,206** | | | **20.0%** | **0** |
| 3436 Gages-Purchase of Equipment | 230 | 2,000 | 1,770 | | 1,770 | 11.5% | |
| 3460 Gages -Purchases Food etc | 3,247 | 16,000 | 12,753 | | 12,753 | 20.3% | |
| Cafe :- Indirect Expenditure | **3,476** | **18,000** | **14,524** | **0** | **14,524** | **19.3%** | **0** |
| **Net Income over Expenditure** | **1,317** | **6,000** | **4,683** | | | | |

Continued over page

| | | Actual Year To Date | Current Annual | Variance Annual | Committed Expenditure | Funds Available | % Spent | Transfer to/from EMR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 306 | Thursday Club | | | | | | | |
| 3680 | TC-Subscriptions | 68 | 200 | 133 | | | 33.8% | |
| | Thursday Club :- Income | **68** | **200** | **133** | | | **33.8%** | **0** |
| 3636 | TC-Running Costs | 0 | 1,000 | 1,000 | | 1,000 | 0.0% | |
| | Thursday Club :- Indirect Expenditure | **0** | **1,000** | **1,000** | **0** | **1,000** | **0.0%** | **0** |
| | **Net Income over Expenditure** | **68** | **(800)** | **(868)** | | | | |
| 406 | Youth Provision | | | | | | | |
| 4676 | YP-Grants & Other Income | 130 | 1,500 | 1,370 | | | 8.7% | |
| | Youth Provision :- Income | **130** | **1,500** | **1,370** | | | **8.7%** | **0** |
| 4603 | YP - Dev costs & General Expen | 543 | 4,000 | 3,457 | | 3,457 | 13.6% | |
| | Youth Provision :- Indirect Expenditure | **543** | **4,000** | **3,457** | **0** | **3,457** | **13.6%** | **0** |
| | **Net Income over Expenditure** | **(413)** | **(2,500)** | **(2,087)** | | | | |
| | Localism & Community Projects :- Income | **6,010** | **34,050** | **28,040** | | | **17.7%** | |
| | Expenditure | **7,668** | **51,300** | **43,632** | **0** | **43,632** | **14.9%** | |
| | **Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve** | **(1,658)** | **(17,250)** | **(15,592)** | | | | |
| | Grand Totals:- Income | **6,010** | **34,050** | **28,040** | | | **17.7%** | |
| | Expenditure | **7,668** | **51,300** | **43,632** | **0** | **43,632** | **14.9%** | |
| | **Net Income over Expenditure** | **(1,658)** | **(17,250)** | **(15,592)** | | | | |
| | **Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve** | **(1,658)** | **(17,250)** | **(15,592)** | | | | |

# <u>Gages Café</u>

## 18th March 2026 to 30th June 2026

Total Number of Meals 1014

Total Deliveries 330

Total Eat In 684

Gages is running well. All shifts are covered unless someone is on holiday or sick, but I can usually find someone else to cover.

Emma has just resigned so we will be advertising for a new paid cook to start at the beginning of September.

We had our Food Hygiene/Health & Safety annual check two weeks ago and retained our 5 Star certificate.

## Thursday Club

Thursday Club continues to meet on 1st & 3rd Thursday of every month.

### Numbers

There are generally around 15 attendees to each session depending on what activity is taking place. We have recently welcomed a new member but lost one due to ill-health.

### Activities

We have received visits from the following over the past few weeks:

1. Angel with her amazing Harp
2. A talk on the Shetland Bus
3. A talk from the East Grinstead Museum

Outings are now in preparation for August & September.

### Transport

Transport continues to be the biggest problem when arranging outings.

# Library

## July 2026

We have 10 regular volunteers in the library every Friday, from 1 to 4pm.

They each cover 2 or 3 shifts every three months.

The three new volunteers have settled in well.

All is running smoothly.

Youth Club

People's Report

April -June

Lots of new members to Club - it would seem with brighter , longer days and later evenings, that this is encouraging more interest and attendance of club.

We recently took on a new youth worker Will - who has been with us since the end of May.

Will has bought a lot of energy with him, and has a background in sports - and is a fitness enthusiast. This has been great for the youth, as the sessions are becoming more active and focused.

We were donated a boxing bag and Will has been training with the Teenagers and has already formed some great relationships and is often asked for during sessions.

Gemilia is now back from leave and has been fantastic in her return to work efforts.

It's been great to have a full team and that everyone brings their own skill sets individually, this enables dynamic working across the board with different groups.

Activities:

Tournaments , Baking , Easter egg hunts and regular arts and crafts and beauty nights with Older teens

Volunteers :

We now have 5 regular youth volunteers - 1 Duke of Edinburgh - 2 NEAT youth.

MM has also hosted 4 work experience students this year from different schools / colleges.

Volunteers are such a valuable resource to us and it has been so empowering for these youth to take on more responsibility in club.

The Heatwave - we stayed open - we had gazebos and iced drinks for youth .

We made pastas and resourced ice creams to make sure that the youth were safe in the sun -we had water fights and lots of fun for all youth in and outside on the park. We fed and watered 30+ teenagers Across the 2 days.

We were growing our own veg in our planters and youth are active in supporting with this.

At our last team meeting MM suggested that we set up a " swap and drop " box - a box of decent clothes , trainers for teenagers to have based in venue - MM will contact The shed re building this - we have started collections.

We were also given the money to buy a Smart Television from Wendy and Ruth - this is very exciting for us as it will enable - live streaming and also film nights etc !!

MM will ask the Shed if they can build a unit stand for tv that's lockable for all consoles etc!

Lots of upcoming plans for summer - we will host a fun day for leavers year 6 this year.

MM is supporting a mother with supervision visits of her child through forest row primary over the past few months.

Lots of positives but with the longer , later days this has ramped up behaviour that challenges - anti social behaviour - this is a constant bug bear in the summer months !

MM is working alongside Sussex community police to try to manage this.

MM Is connecting with dedicated youth officer to discuss ways of managing this.

Over the past quarter a lot of MMs work has involved community engagement- what's happening board steering group and also the square meetings.

Update for FRPC about low-cost counselling service April 1st 2025 to 31st March 2026

**Number of sessions held - 248 (31 March 2026)**

**(compared to 144 last financial year)**

**Number of sessions budgeted for going forward (16)**

**Number of clients worked with 31 (18 last year).**

**Average client contribution is £14.50**

**We are currently offering free supervision to counsellors for their work connected to the service and continue to do initial client triage and all admin as part of the service, without any cost to FRPC.**

**We have £120 set aside for emergency sessions beyond those planned in above.**

**We start out financial year in April 2026**

**Client Demographics**

Under 21 - 10
21-40 7
41-61 11
Over 61 3

We currently have **3 clients on our waiting list.**

We now have **8 counsellors on our books giving us a pool of different approaches and experience.**

**Thank you for your support, Diane and Owen.**

Request for addendum to low-cost counselling service proposal

The amount of admin Diane and I do as part of the management of the service has increased alongside the number of residents we now work with over a year. Last year we saw 31 clients, all requiring triage and allocation to one of the team.

Admin includes

Triage (responding to enquiries and then speaking to clients to determine eligibility and then presenting issues – while this would normally form part of a counsellor's remit in private practice we often then pass on the clients to our team)

Allocation (based on preferences of client and their presenting issues ensuring they see a counsellor with the right expertise and fit)

Managing budget

Centralised invoicing to the council

Management of counsellors (responding to any client issues and discussing safeguarding concerns as well as communications on process)

Supervision (free supervision for counsellors)

Reporting and communications (compiling quarterly reports for the council and talking to groups like the youth service)

Last year we probably did well over 20 hours each on the above in the 12 months.

This year we have written a handbook for therapists, set up more admin procedures (which will ultimately make life easier for us) and agreed some new processes for enquiries moving that online where we can.

This all take time and we are not being paid for it after already doing subsidised counselling work (which we want to continue to offer as part of the service to the community)

We are asking how you would feel if we paid ourselves for some of the admin work? NGOs typically set aside 7% for admin which if used as a model would mean £190 each from the allocated funds (works out for admin 9.65 an hour).

We are happy to discuss this with the finance committee but are interested in your thoughts on the above.

Owen and Diane

Comms & Outreach Group

Notes of Meeting 19th May 2026

Present: Cllrs Eichner (JE), Evans (AE), Killick (AK), Marshall (GM), Matthews (BM), Volkers (AV), The Clerk (DOD) & Asst Clerk (AJS)

Apologies: Cllrs Christie (BC), Jaffay (AJ), Rainbow (RR)

Cllr. Volkers chaired the meeting.

1. Apologies
Cllrs. Christie, Jaffay and Rainbow gave their apologies owing to work.

2. Volunteer Fair & 3D Event
Discussion was had about the Volunteer Fair & 3D Event. AJS explained that voluntary organisations are on-line. There has been a lot of press recently about the downturn in being able to recruit volunteers.

AJS will investigate the cost & implications of joining Wealden Volunteering. AJS to explore the cost of pull up boards for volunteers to place in CC & VENUE. Volunteer leaflet to be designed for drop off to local schools for potential volunteers.

It was decided that due to time implications, the 3D Event & Volunteer Fair would be put back until September time. Office will advise of available dates.

AV will feedback to AJ.

3. Grotto Organiser
AJS mentioned that September would be a better time to recruit an organizer. However, it was decided that the advert would be re-worded and sent out again. AE asked that councillors spread the word amongst their own contacts.

4. Forest Row Local

AV will feedback to councillors on when articles are needed.

5. Forest Row Festival

Much discussion was had about the volunteers and safety aspects of the Festival. AJS & DOD reiterated that neither was the responsibility of FRPC. It was decided that JE would email the organisers to ask for clarification that safety issues were in place. Councillors were reminded that if they were involved with the festival, then it must be in a personal capacity.

6. Market
After discussion, it was decided that the office would ask Emily in for a meeting to discuss.

7. Newsletter & Mailing List
JE to add mailing list sign-up form to the website. AJS asked for contributions for the next newsletter.

8. Non-councillors' advisory role

AV floated the idea of recruiting a diverse committee for the council. JE thought that this was a good idea. BM thought that this would be an ideal way to gain information from the Community. Idea to be discussed at the next meeting.

9. Meetings on Outlook

AJS to explore the options of adding meetings on the Outlook Calendar.

10. Councillors' Reading

Much discussion was had on this item. DOD produced two copies of the last reading notes in the current format and AI. Discussion followed. JE to meet with DOD to discuss ways of streamlining the reading notes

11. Date of next meeting

GM to chair. GM will call into office to check suitable dates.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm