

FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Framfield Parish Council (PC) held at the Village Hall, Blackboys, on Tuesday, 28 November 2023 at 5 pm.

Present	Councillors	Keith Brandon (Chairman)	David Jenner
		Trishia Blewitt	Maria Naylor
		Tony Hall (Vice Chairman)	
		Councillor Ann Newton (WDC)	
		Councillor Chris Dowling (ESCC).	

In attendance Ann Newton - Clerk Members of the Public – none.

Councillor Chris Dowling (ESCC) gave the following update:

Blackboys

- Gun Road bridge – Chris voiced his complete disappointment that the second meeting with the Environmental Agency (EA) has been cancelled by them. The EA permit has not yet been issued but hopefully might before Christmas. The suggestion was made that the PC could make a formal complaint to the EA. [*Post meeting note: the permit has now been issued*].
- Community Match Funding (CMF) – although an update has been asked for no further news has come through.
- B2192 – route survey work – again, no further news.
- Chapel Lane, Blackboys – temporary speed limit reduction – it is not feasible to impose a lower speed limit because a Road Traffic Order would be required. Additional ‘slow’ and ‘unsuitable for HGV’ signs have been added.
- Lewes Road – the Police are carrying out patrols. Chris offered to send in the data they have produced.

Framfield

- Crash B2102 near Pound Hill. Chris is in receipt of a letter of concern about the junction from a local resident.
- Sandy Lane – disability access - the condition of the pavements is under investigation following on from concerns from local residents.
- The Street – following on from a letter from a local resident with a wife with disabilities, Chris will look into it further.
- Footpath from the Hare & Hounds to Hammonds Green – this is now very overgrown.
- Leak to the east of Pump Lane – this has now been delayed until next year – 2 January 2024. The suggestion was made for signs warning drivers of the problem.

Councillor Ann Newton (WDC) – gave the following update:

- Local Plan – a special Full Council has been diarised for the publication of the Local Plan; the paper will be available the week before.
- Hailsham Sports Hub – the recommendation to allocate extra CIL funds to the project was agreed at the recent Full Council against some opposition at the escalated cost of the project.
- Council Strategy – this was adopted by Full Council against the recommendations from WGOD (Working Group Against Over-Development).

(The minutes are detailed in the order in which they appeared on the agenda but not necessarily the order in which they were taken at the meeting).

1. Apologies for Absence

Marie Owen – Responsible Finance Officer.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors to give notice of declarations of personal, prejudicial and pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda. There were none.

3. To accept the Minutes of the last meeting (26 September 2023)

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2023, having been circulated, as a true and accurate record as proposed by Keith Brandon and seconded by Maria Naylor.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

All other items are included elsewhere in the minutes.

- Parish Streetlighting – update. The Clerk stated that she had met with the relevant officer and Balfour Beatty are expecting each council who doesn't wish to have a streetlighting system upgraded to meet their requirements, to sign an agreement before any repair work can go-ahead. This is very similar to the disclaimer which the previous contractor suggested the PC sign. Clerk and Chairman to look at the agreement.
- Stiles – Sandy Lane to the rear of Framfield recreation ground – update. The Clerk reported that she had met with the agent of the landowner who had identified what work was needed.
- John Dann Close – further issues with non-residential parking and a derelict car. Liaison is continuing with WDC and Clarion Housing Association. Clarion have advised that parking enforcement is to be put in place and the suggestion made that they should consult with the PC as the road is the main entrance to the recreation ground.

5. Correspondence received since the last meeting

Letters for noting/discussion (Including items that have been received after this agenda has been published) – most items were from pending matters and dealt with under separate headings.

- ESCC:
 - Urban grass cutting options 2024. The meeting agreed once again to go-ahead with the four extra cuts carried out by the ESCC contractor.
 - Claimed Footpath 67b/68c – update Clerk/David Jenner. David Jenner reported that he had walked the paths and liaised with the relevant Rights of Way Officer and a report was thought to be forthcoming. The separate issues with some of the paths had been reported.
- WDC:
 - Local Plan Update. As detailed above.
 - Framfield Footpath 40d – diversion request. This had been agreed by the PC.
- WGO (Working Group Against Over Development): letters sent to WDC – all Councillors in receipt of copies.
- Email from Bob De'Ath. A meeting was to be set up between the writer and Chris Dowling with regard to attempt to stop unsuitable HGV-type though traffic along the B2102.

6. Finance and General Purposes:

- a) Budget discussion – 2024/25 – all Councillors were in receipt of a spreadsheet detailing the draft budget and a budget report. Following discussion this was agreed as proposed by Maria Naylor and seconded by Tony Hall. In brief, the budget required for the 2024/25 financial year is £81,805, this is a £8,805 (12%) increase on the previous year's costs but a £12,805 increase from last year's precept as the Council had agreed to use reserves to fund the shortfall. The precept was therefore agreed at £81,805, an 18.6% increase or £13.38 on an equivalent Band D property per annum. The increase will assist in covering the costs of the repairs to the streetlights.
- b) Staff salaries – recommendation that the RFO and Clerk are awarded a pay review in line with the NALC salary scales. This was agreed as proposed by David Jenner and seconded by Trishia Blewitt.
- c) Reserves/CIL. The Clerk reported that two allocations of CIL payments could effectively expire in April and October next year totally £21,820. This could have been used towards the CMF work but it is now unlikely that the funds will be needed in this financial year. Work to streetlights or halls could come into play.
- d) Bank account issues. The Chairman outlined the recent problems with Barclays bank and the meeting agreed that opening accounts at the Unity Bank should be explored as proposed by Keith Brandon and seconded by David Jenner.
- e) Bank reconciliation, balances and accounts – all Councillors were in receipt of a copy of the financial sheets for comparison and agreement. The accounts were verified as correct by the Council. (DJ/TB).
- f) Resolve to agree the since the September 2023 meeting the payments/disbursements as detailed on the report as circulated. These were agreed and detailed at the end of the minutes. These were agreed (DJ/TB).
- g) Any other financial matters: there were none.
 - Roles for Councillors – agreed as below:

- David Jenner – Halls and Public Rights of Way (footpaths).
- Maria Naylor - Planning.
- Trishia Blewitt - Allotments and recreation grounds (including play areas and trees).
- Keith Brandon – Highways and streetlighting.
- Biodiversity Policy for discussion – draft attached. The meeting were happy with the policy and the Chairman offered to format it in line with the PC's other policies.

7. Planning Committee.

- The minutes/delegated comments since the last Parish Council meeting were agreed as read.
- Planning Chair – Maria Naylor agreed to take over as Chair due to the Chairman's local business commitments (TH/TB).
- Bird in Eye Public Inquiry – update. The Clerk updated the meeting that the appeal had been dismissed seemingly with all doors for further applications firmly closed.
- Land South of Framfield Road – update. The Clerk reported that as the developer has gone into liquidation it will be interesting to see who takes over the site.
- Framfield Recreation Ground – telecommunications mast. An application has been received to replace the antennae on the mast. The mast itself will remain in situ and the finished product no taller in line with the stipulations of the lease agreement.

8. Verbal Reports/updates from Council Members and the Clerk (if required).

- Liaison with ESCC on highway matters – all mainly as detailed above.
 - Lewes Road, Blackboys
 - Update on CMF – as above.
 - Update on Route Survey Work - as above.
 - High Street, Blackboys – update on discussions to lower the speed limit to 30-mph. The Clerk reported that seemingly a fee of £2,5-3k was required to commence the work to design and cost new streetlighting for any speed reduction scheme. The PC agreed to wait until a new developer for the 50-house site is on board. At which time they can meet with them and see if they will honour the contribution towards the scheme which Gold had promised.
 - Gun Road, Blackboys – bridge update – as above.
 - Chapel Lane, Blackboys – suggestion of a temporary lower speed limit whilst Gun Road is closed – refused as a TRO would be required – as above.
 - Leak to the east of Pump Lane – update – as above.
 - Pound Lane, Framfield – works completed.
 - VAS, Blackboys – check completed.
 - Junction of High Street, Chapel and Star Lanes, Blackboys – checked, no further action.
 - Uptons Mill Bridge signs – update – the works are to be completed by the end of March 2024.
 - High Street, Blackboys, overgrown streetlights. Some pruning has been carried out.
 - Gatehouse/Sandy Lane – uneven pavement/disability access – as above.
 - Stonebridge Lane – following on from a report of the condition of the side of the lane by the Chairman, two cones have appeared.
- SLR meetings – no further meetings scheduled.
- Clerk – report on any other items not recorded elsewhere in the agenda.
 - B2102 – pavement adjacent to Pound Hill – reported as impassable due to overgrown grass.
 - 2024 Meeting dates – distributed to councillors.
 - John Dann Close – the Clerk has been asked to look into the planning conditions for the site which has always been for tenants with a local connection to the Parish.

9. Reports from Representatives

- **WDALC** (Wealden District Association of Local Councils) – minutes to be sent out as and when received.
- **Parish Planning Panel (c/o Clerk/Tony Hall)** - minutes to be sent out as and when received.
- **CSAG – Police (Chairman/Clerk)** – the Chairman and Clerk attend the meetings. It is thought that the meetings are now in abeyance.
- **Cluster meetings – WDC Planning/Local Plan (Chairman/Clerk).**

10. Items for reporting/discussion/ratification from the Trusts for which the Parish Council is Sole Trustee

A: General

Halls

- Future works –update. The Clerk reported that there has been one expression of interest and also an electrician was now on board.

Recreation Grounds

- New litter/dog bins – the Chairman said he had investigated new/better bins and agreement was given for their order to be funded by CIL.
- Communication Boards - £286.00 – agreement was given to purchase the boards, one for each play area.

B: Framfield Trust – Charity Registration No. 305228

Memorial Hall

- Update on the claim/drainage works – claim closed; quote to be obtained for drainage works. Chairman to pass on drainage plan to potential contractor.
- Community Fund application – Framfield & Blackboys Horticultural Society and the Village Show Committee. The Clerk advised that no charge was made for the use of the Hall for the Show this year but that she had applied for £250.00 from the fund to help pay the installation of the switching the Hall lights to LED.
- Market dates – everyone was in receipt of a copy of the dates.

Recreation Ground

- Two tree stumps need to be removed from the eastern side of the ground. The ground immediately around the roots has subsided leaving gaps, potential foot traps. Barriers have been erected around the area. Grounds maintenance contractors will carry out the works in the winter – Clerk to chase.
- Request to place a wreath on the memorial plinth for Remembrance Sunday – this was granted.

C: Blackboys Trust – Charity Registration No. 305225

Village Hall

- Potential bookings – the Clerk reported that bookings are increasing and there may be the chance that a local Scouts group may operate out of the hall whilst their hall is being refurbished.

Recreation Ground

- Gated access – update. A fencing contractor was employed to carry out the work but on arrival it was discovered that the gate had been removed and filled in by the residents.
- Play area – post to be replaced in fence – work completed.

Pavilion

- The water system has been drained down for the winter.

Allotments

- The Clerk reported that there are several spare plots.

D: Framfield Allotment Garden Trust – Charity Registration No. 296468

- Clearance continuing of multiple plot area – update on the works. The meeting agreed that the area was looking very good. The Chairman requested permission to purchase some 'private' notices for the allotments as people seem to be walking through them not realising that there is no public thoroughfare.

11. Items for referral by Councillors to the next appropriate Council or Committee agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.55 pm.

NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING will be held on Tuesday, 30 January 2024 commencing at 5 pm in the Village Hall, Blackboys.

Income and Expenditure Sept/Oct/Nov 2023

Invoice	Income/Exp	Item Heading	Comments	Pre VAT	VAT (£)	TOTAL (£)
09/10/2023	Inc	Precept	Wealden DC	34,500.00		34,500.00
14/11/2023	Inc	Other	Lottery	17.50		17.50
10/10/2023	Inc	Other	Lottery	18.00		18.00
Invoice Date	Income/Exp	Item Heading	Comments	Pre VAT VALUE (£)	VAT (£)	TOTAL (£)
07/10/2023	Exp	NI & Paye	WG Accounting	802.22		802.22
07/11/2023	Exp	General	Bookers	61.18		61.18
28/10/2023	Exp	Website	Ionos	23.00	4.60	27.60
21/10/2023	Exp	Election Expenses	Wealden DC	934.88		934.88
25/10/2023	Exp	Staff Costs	Staff Costs	2,703.31		2,703.31
26/10/2023	Exp	Pension	NEST	296.48		296.48
19/10/2023	Exp	Pension	NEST	296.48		296.48
17/09/2023	Exp	NI & Paye	WG Accounting	802.22		802.22
30/09/2023	Exp	Subscriptions	WDALC	27.00		27.00
26/07/2023	Exp	Insurance	Gallagher Insurance	4,683.28		4,683.28
01/10/2023	Exp	I A Fee/GDPR	WG Accounting	120.00		120.00
03/10/2023	Exp	General	Timpson	58.50		58.50
05/09/2023	Exp	Loan Interest	Public Works Loan	2,914.21		2,914.21
28/09/2023	Exp	Website	Ionos	20.00	4.00	24.00
27/09/2023	Exp	Hall Hire	Blackboys Hall Hire	24.00		24.00
17/09/2023	Exp	Staff Costs	Staff Costs	2,703.31		2,703.31
24/09/2023	exp	Recreation Grounds	Amazon	63.32	12.67	75.99
21/09/2023	exp	Pension	NEST	296.48		296.48

Signed

Date