

# Minutes of the Meeting of Framfield Parish Council held at the Memorial Hall, Framfield, on Tuesday, 31 March 2009 at 7.30 pm

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## Present

Eryl Thomas (Chairman)	Mark Moore
David Andrews	Maria Naylor
Myran Eade	Rob Newton (Vice Chair)
Peter Friend	Ian Paisley
Brian Hodge	Fred Thurston

Councillor Chris Dowling (ESCC)

## In attendance

Ann Newton - Clerk	Members of the Public – one.
	Members of the Press – none.

*Prior to the commencement of the meeting members of the public and County and District Representatives were invited to address the Parish Council.*

A resident from The Street, Framfield, came to the meeting to raise two points:-

- To complain about the amount of dog fouling that appeared to be going on around Framfield. The Clerk explained that as when he attended the meeting previously on the same subject, WDC were the enforcement authority and the Dog Warden can be asked to patrol areas pointing out to people their obligations. There have been dog bins on the recreation grounds for sometime at a substantial cost to the Parish Council but the problem is endeavouring to get residents to use them or indeed clean up after their dogs when out on the streets. The Clerk stated that she would contact the Dog Warden.
- The resident also voiced his concern over the apparent large rise in the Parish Council's part of the Council Tax – some 17%. Eryl Thomas explained that the increase was because for a considerable number of years the PC has had to dip into its reserves in order to meet the budget with ever increasing costs. This cannot continue. An article has been placed in the Parish Magazine explaining the issue and stating that using percentages can be deceptive as the actual rise in monetary terms for say a Band D property is £6.00 a year or 50p per month. Whereas 1% of the Parish Precept is approximately £400.00 compared to 1% of WDC's precept, at £100,000. The meeting thought that a fuller breakdown of the budget could be put in the next magazine after the year-end figures are available. The Clerk stated that compared to other rural parish councils, Framfield is unusual in that it has three recreation grounds, three play areas, two halls and two sets of allotments along with 73 streetlights which amounts to a great deal of responsibility and expenditure for a small Parish.

## Councillor Chris Dowling (ESCC) commented on two points:

- That ESCC had drawn up some improvements to the roundabout at Cysleys Farm along with the contractor Linden Homes. It is hoped that these alterations will alleviate the current problems.
- The County Council has been audited by the Audit Commission – Comprehensive Performance Assessment – and has been awarded a four star, excellent council, rating. Eight years ago it only attained a one star rating. It is now rated the best council in England for Children's Services with Adult Social Care Services as very good.

**Councillor Ann Newton (WDC)** commented that as detailed in various newspaper articles WDC were looking at a drastic cost-cutting exercise to be able to meet a large deficit in the year 2010/11. Much of the losses are due to the reduction in interest rate on their reserves.

The Clerk read out a report submitted by **PSCO Simon French** as he was unable to attend the meeting he would like the Council know what he has have been up to since the last meeting in February. He has made 8 Patrols in Framfield, 6 Patrols in Blackboys, 4 Patrols in Halland, 3 Patrols in Palehouse Common, 2 School visits to Framfield and Blackboys schools, 1 visit to Framfield elderlies Monday club and 1 'surgery' at Village Market, Memorial Hall. He welcomes any feedback after the meeting.

*(The minutes are detailed in the order in which they appeared on the agenda. A copy of all the reports mentioned will be attached to the minutes for the minute book).*

## 1. Apologies for Absence

Rita Redman.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors to give notice of declarations of personal and prejudicial interests in respect of items on the agenda. Rob Newton declared a prejudicial interest in the item on the Clerk's salary on the finance sheet. The Clerk being his wife.

## 3. Minutes of the Last Meeting, 24 February 2009 for Approval

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2009 having been circulated, be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record. (Proposed by Myran Eade and seconded by Rob Newton).

## 4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 24 February 2009

All items were covered during the rest of the meeting.

## 5. Correspondence received since the last meeting

Letters for noting/discussion

WDC:

- Sites of Nature Conservation Importance sites within the Parish. Asking if the Council owned the areas of land mentioned. The Clerk to reply in the negative.

Other:

- Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre - SNCI within the Parish. In line with the above letter asking if the Council owned the areas of land mentioned. The Clerk to reply in the negative.
- Applause Rural Touring.

## 6. Finance

- **Formal agreement of the March 2009 expenditure as detailed on the report circulated at the meeting** – itemised below. This included three items to be paid in early April.
- The Clerk stated that NALC had agreed the final pay settlement for 2008/09, which meant an increase of 3p per hour on the Clerk's salary! The meeting agreed that this should be backdated to 1 April 2008. Proposed by Ian Paisley, seconded by Maria Naylor and agreed by all present.

£

### Cheques already paid

Ann Newton, Clerk (reimbursement for postage stamps) 63.00

### Cheques to be paid in March

South East Water (BB allotments) 13.05

Blackboys Village Hall (Hall hire) 20.00  
(charity investment dividends) 135.77 155.77

Framfield Memorial hall (Hall hire) 52.50  
(insurance) 928.98 981.48

EDF Energy DD Energy 191.15  
DD Maintenance 103.35 294.50

Ann Newton, Clerk: Salary (March) 1,096.33  
Final backdated pay 31.80  
Total expenses 69.39 1,197.52

Total Expenditure (March) £2,705.32

### Cheques Received

BlackRock Charitable Dividends 135.77

East Hoathly with Halland PC – annual internet charge £60.00  
- share of BT account £47.75 107.75

### Cheques to be paid out in April

Arbor Management (maintenance BB rec and allotments) 550.63

SALC (annual subscription) 513.47

Allianz Insurance plc (annual premium) 2,675.20

Total Expenditure (April) £3,739.30

Cheque number 700782 is void.

The expenditure was proposed for agreement by Brian Hodge, seconded by Mark Moore, and agreed by all present.

Eryl Thomas commented that his initial thoughts were that the Council was just inside the budget by approximately £100/200.00.

## 7. Committees

**Planning:** the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2009 had already been circulated. All members were in receipt of the agenda for the next meeting scheduled for 1 April 2009.

- Maria Naylor commented that the number of planning applications were down presumably due to the economic situation.
- Brian Hodge updated the meeting on two items – the changes proposed to High Tree House, Eastbourne Road, were refused at WDC. The appeal had been completed for the Quicken Wood site and the decision would be known very soon. One concern was that the Inspector had to initially decide if he was going to proceed with any decision as the Enforcement notices had not been correctly served. If this is the case, he might ask that they be re-served and the appeal heard again!

**Recreation Grounds: (Parish Councillors as Trustees):** the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2009 had already been circulated. The next meeting is scheduled for 13 May 2009.

The Clerk reported that a letter had arrived from David Jenner asking for formal permission to use the Framfield recreation ground for a live music function on the evening of the Summer Show on 8 August 2009 jointly run by the Football and Cricket Clubs. The PC gave their agreement but suggested in the Clerk's reply that she should make certain that full permission had been given by the Horticultural Society for the use of the Marquee.

- **Pavilion Project:**

- **Blackboys:** Myran Eade reported that the grant application to Virador had not been successful as the ground was outside the ten-mile radius for grants. An application was now to be made to Veolia. The Elvis Night raised £1,700 totalling £20,000 that the Cricket Club can put towards the Pavilion.

A meeting would be called soon.

**Environment:** everyone was in receipt of the agenda for the next meeting, 1 April 2009. The Clerk confirmed that neither Messrs Oates nor Higgs would not be attending from ESCC as they had not yet completed the paperwork. Confirmation was awaited as to which meeting they would attend.

## 8. Reports from Representatives

### **Blackboys Village Hall:**

- Eryl Thomas reported that the bookings were steady and the finances fairly sound. Quotes had been obtained to build some steps from the car park to the Hall. A decision has been made not to proceed at present with any further works to the surfacing of the car park. At the AGM in July it is hoped to be able to keep the hire rates the same. The suggestion of putting an advertisement for both Halls in the Parish Magazine has been made.

### **Memorial Hall:**

- The Clerk reported as follows:-
  - **Update on the Charity Commission/ Update on Memorial Hall meeting of 9 March 2009.** The Clerk reported that the Chairman had stepped down and the rest of the Committee resolved to cease to be in its current form and hand over to the Parish Council, hopefully in its new role as Administrative Trustee. Final confirmation is still awaited from the Charity Commission on the changes and merger with recreation ground charity following on from all the required paperwork eventually being sent off.

### **Schools:**

**Framfield:** The Clerk reported that the School had a splendid day for the opening of the new part of the School and library dedicated to Rosemary James.

**Blackboys** – The Clerk reported that the School had an Ofsted inspection the previous week and the initial news was good. The full report would not be available until after Easter. There had also been a meeting for parents and residents over the installation of a telegraph pole with antenna at the instigation of ESCC, Education Services, in order that the School can receive an upgraded broadband service along with all other primary schools in East Sussex. There had been a very low attendance at the meeting and any concerns over the 'mast' alleviated by ESCC. The pole is not a telecommunications mast and only produces a very low

emission on a 'point to point' basis with the Crowborough Police Mast. A full planning application would be submitted by ESCC when the usual consultations would apply.

**WDALC:** Nothing to report. There would be a meeting later in the week.

**9. Any Other Business at the Discretion of the Chairman**

- **Annual Assembly.** At the Clerk's request the meeting agreed to change the date of the AGM from 19 to 26 May 2009. This would only be a formal AGM followed by the Annual Assembly at 8 pm. Both at Blackboys Village Hall.
- **Brian Hodge** reported on his day with ESCC at the Transport Seminar. He felt it was a very informative seminar with reports on speed reviews and bus services amongst other items.
- **Eryl Thomas** flagged up an issue brought to him by Framfield's District Councillor. A report had been submitted to a WDC Committee summarising the terms of reference and issues for a Community Governance Review which had been initially instigated by Maresfield Parish Council over a request for a boundary change. It appeared that Uckfield Town Council had indicated that they had a couple of areas which they wished to be looked at by WDC during the review, one of them being the area around Bird in Eye using the reasoning that the area currently covers two parishes. Following discussion the meeting decided to write to WDC for an explanation as to why the Parish Council had not been formally informed of the suggestions and also Uckfield Town Council. The entire number of houses proposed in the two recent dismissed appeals are in the Parish of Framfield. It is only the proposals for Harlands shown in plans for the South side of Bird in Eye that are in Uckfield. Harlands is already an allocated site for development.  
*NB. Mark Moore took no part in the discussion on this item.*

*The meeting closed at 9.50pm.*

**Chairman**.....

**Date** .....

**NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:  
Tuesday, 28 April 2009, 7.30 pm, Memorial Hall, Framfield..**