

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of Framfield Parish held at the Village Hall, Blackboys, on Tuesday, 16 May 2023 at 6 pm

Present: Councillors - Keith Brandon (Chairman)
Tony Hall (Vice Chairman)
Trishia Blewitt
David Jenner
Maria Naylor.

In attendance Ann Newton - Clerk
Marie Owen – RFO. Members of the public - none

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Chris Dowling (ESCC).

2. Minutes of the Annual Assembly held on 29 March 2022

It was agreed that the minutes from the Annual Assembly held on 29 March 2022 having been circulated, be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record (TH/KB).

3. Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council

Keith Brandon made the following report – a copy of which will be put in the next available copy of the Parish Magazine and website.

I would firstly like to advise everybody that Councillor Peter Friend has decided to retire from the Council after just over 16 years' service to the Parish. Peter will be greatly missed from the team and has offered a wealth of experience and wisdom over the years. "Thank you, Peter, we wish you well, and hope to see you at the village markets".

We also welcome new councillors – Councillor Trishia Blewitt and the return of Councillor David Jenner. We had an uncontested election this year, and still have seats available for co-opting. If anybody would be interested in joining the Parish Council, please pop along to one of our meetings and/or email us for more details.

The Parish Council is financially in a good place. Whilst we have some higher reserves than normal, there are plans for some upcoming major works/projects throughout the Parish which will require significant funding.

We have some ongoing projects and issues that are being addressed with various stakeholders. At the time of writing this, I can confirm that I and other councillors that have re-stood for election will be able to continue with this work, avoiding further delay. Details can be read in the meeting minutes. The quickest way to access these is via our website.

Between the Parish Council and Trusts, there is plenty of work to do. Our costs have increased significantly which is why there was a modest increase in the Precept. As already mentioned, if you think that you would like to be a councillor and take some of the workload, please get in touch.

The Wealden Community Lottery has now been active for a few weeks. Unfortunately, we only have 4 supporters at present, and so our hopes of new outdoor gym equipment may take some time.

Whilst the Village Market was very busy in April, it would be nice to see more engagement from the local community. Funds raised from this go towards to the upkeep of the Memorial Hall.

2023-2024 is going to be extremely busy and challenging. Our biggest challenge at the moment is the campaign to reduce the speed limit in Blackboys to 30-mph. This is an extremely complicated process, and updates will be available in the village magazine, and on our website.

Finally, thank you to the staff and councillors for all of the work put in over the past year and term. Thank you for all of the comments and thanks from within the community, it is wonderful to know that even small differences are appreciated.

4. Report from District and County Representatives

Councillor Ann Newton (ESCC) made a short verbal report.

Firstly, it is great pleasure to continue to represent the Framfield & Cross in Hand Ward on Wealden District Council. I now enter my fifth term, some 16 years with the Council.

The election was the most vicious from the five I have been involved with – the conundrums for residents – the three ‘P’s’ – ‘Parliament, Planning and Potholes’!

The Conservatives ran candidates in 44 seats. Out of 41 wards, the number of candidates from the Greens and Lib Dems who stood against each other was just 3 seats. The number where all parties were represented was zero.

As now an opposition leader, I shall be holding the new administration to scrutiny at every turn. I also want to leave you with a few facts about the position of WDC as left under the previous administration.

1. The recycling rate of Wealden District Council is 49.5% - the highest recycling in Sussex. Less than 1% of our waste goes into landfill with just under 50% going to the incinerator which in turn generates electricity.
2. The charge for brown bins is £55.00 per annum.
3. The Wealden District Council proportion of Council rose by 2.99% and the Council was in a good financial position.
4. The Council has maintained free car parking in Wealden car parks to support the local economy. We were also opposed to on street car park charging (parking meters).
5. We have created a new modern Crematorium serves the local community and generates an income for the Council.

Finally, if anyone would like me to attend an event or come to a meeting to address them regarding Wealden District Council or I can assist as your elected representative please do not hesitate to contact me.

5. Any Other Parish Business and Questions

There was none.

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm.

Chairman.....

Date