

# Framlingham Town Council



## Minutes of a Meeting of Framlingham Town Council held in the Castle Community Rooms Framlingham at 7pm on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024

### 1. Present & Apologies

Councillors Eastwood (Chair), Cope, Dean, Higham, Knights, Rose, A. Wraight and P. Wraight. There were no apologies for absence.

### 2. In Attendance

Alan Davidson (Responsible Financial Officer) Lydia Kindred (Deputy Town Clerk), County Councillor Stephen Burroughes (online), District Councillor Langdon-Morris and 5 residents (including one online until item 7).

3. **There was some discussion on electing a Vice-Chair.** With Councillors Higham and P. Wraight both wishing to be considered for the role, Cllr. Dean proposed that the Council elect two Vice-Chairs. This was seconded by Cllr. Eastwood and carried with seven Councillors in favour and one against. **FCM-2024-09-04/1**

4. **There were no changes to the committee structure.**

### 5. Minutes

Cllr. Eastwood proposed accepting the Minutes 7<sup>th</sup> August as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. S. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-09-04/2**

6. **There were no declarations of interest.**

## **ADJOURN**

### 7. Public Forum

- 7.1 The local police officer provided a brief written report.
- 7.2. The County Councillor's monthly report has been shared with Councillors and published on our website. Cllr. Burroughes provided a short verbal update and sent his best wishes for the Tour of Britain visiting Framlingham on Sunday.
- 7.3 District Councillor Langdon-Morris provided a written report. In addition, he outlined events he has organised for the Tour of Britain including a free bike advice service and a community cycle to follow the Tour through the town. He gave an update on responses to SCC's Section 19 report and advised that only 9 of the flooded properties in Framlingham have applied for the government's Property Resilience Grant funding. SCC will be trying to raise awareness of the scheme ahead of the fund closing in April 2025.
- He hopes that the Be Well Bus will run a financial help session again during one of its next visits to the town as this was well received.

### 7.4 Public Comment

A resident was disappointed to note that the recent article on Storm Babet and post-flood action did not mention Framlingham.

A representative from the library gave a report on activities they will be running to celebrate the Tour of Britain's visit, and other events running in autumn. Thanks to a significant private donation, the children's library fundraiser is now near its target.

The representative from Hour Community apologised for incorrect information he shared at August's meeting. Whilst the Town Council were involved in the design of the bollards at Riverside, he now understands that they do not own them.

He advised that Hour Community is busier than ever with bookings already being taken for October and November. They are helping an increasing number of people who do not have computers or the internet to complete forms which is putting additional pressure on them but they will help whenever possible. He is in discussions with Newtide Homes about Hour Community being a point of contact for their 200 tenants in the town to help advocate for the tenants and ensure any property issues they have are resolved efficiently. *The Chair thanked Hour Community for all they do for the town.*

## RECONVENE

### 8. Consider correspondence received:

ESC has confirmed that the election will be held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and completed nomination papers must be hand-delivered to them by 13<sup>th</sup> September.

The Town Council has received another Subject Access Request and a Freedom of Information Act request. Advice has been taken and these have been responded to.

The Town Council has been invited to an event to mark the installation of the new floodlights on 17<sup>th</sup> September at the Sports Club and the Chair will be attending on behalf of the Council.

*Item 15.1 was brought forward.*

**15.1** There was a discussion on whether a second full Council meeting could be held in September instead of having separate Committee meetings to help ease the workload and pressure on office staff during the Town Clerk's extended absence. Councillors can take minutes for meetings which Officers cannot attend and Cllr. Higham provided feedback on both chairing and taking minutes at a recent Lands Committee meeting. Cllr. Dean reminded Councillors that Minutes can be brief and legally need to only record decisions that have been taken. The DTC pointed out that taking the Minutes is only one aspect of the work required for running the meetings and that issuing the agendas and meeting preparation was also time consuming.

Cllr. Higham proposed that committee meetings should run as normal in September, unless there are any which do not need to be held. This was seconded by Cllr. Eastwood and carried with four votes in favour, two against and two abstentions.

**FCM-2024-09-04/3** Cllr. Eastwood suggested that this could be reviewed again next month. Cllr. Wraight reiterated the need for Councillors to attend Committee meetings or there is the risk of meetings not being quorate due to the low current numbers of Councillors. She also wished to thank the office staff, noting that they are continuing to work extremely hard to cover the Clerk's workload.

The RFO offered to clerk the next Lands committee meeting.

### 9 . Finance and Human Resources Committee

9.1 BACS payments approved at August's meeting have been paid as agreed and the bank printout has been verified and signed by two Councillors.

- 9.2 Cllr. Eastwood proposed approving the payment of current invoices as circulated, noting two minor amendments- item 33 is a duplicate and item 29 has been reduced from £1,992 to £1,900. This was seconded by Cllr. Knights and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-09-04/4**
- 9.3 The details of all bank accounts were noted.
- 9.4 To consider the Finance Regulations – Deferred to the Finance Committee.
- 9.5 The effectiveness of the internal audit for the year-ending 31st March 2024 was considered and Councillors were in agreement with the statements as read aloud by the Chair.
- 9.6 The direct debits and standing orders were reviewed.
- 9.7 The RFO will be away for three weeks in October but this is scheduled around the payment cycle and the DTC should be able to make emergency payments if necessary. The RFO will not be here for the Finance Committee meeting. Initial budget preparations will need to be considered when he is here.
- 9.8 Regarding the policy review, the RFO will allocate policies that need reviewing according to committee where possible. These will then be designated to Councillors on that committee.
- 9.9 The RFO ran through a timetable for considering the 2025-2026 budget and precept and this was considered acceptable to Councillors.
- 9.10 Cllr. Eastwood proposed purchasing an internal key safe at a cost of up to £30. This was seconded by Cllr. Higham and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-09-04/5**
- 9.11 Matters of report  
The RFO confirmed that the notice of conclusion of audit has now been received and there were no issues raised by the External Auditors.

## 10. Planning Committee

10.1 Cllr. P. Wright proposed Cllr A. Wright as Chair of the Planning Committee. This was seconded by Cllr. Knights. Cllr. Higham proposed Cllr. Dean as Chair. This was seconded by Cllr. Eastwood. There was some discussion on having two committee Chairs but Cllr. A. Wright expressed concerns about how this would work. The two proposals were voted on and, with abstentions, Cllr A. Wright won the vote by four votes to one. **FCM-2024-09-04/6**

10.2 The following planning appeal was considered:

AP/24/0040/REFUSE regarding DC/24/0226/FUL

Land between the River Ore and Station Road Framlingham IP13 9EZ

Cllr Higham proposed that the Council repeats its original objections and also notes that a large section of this site was flooded during Storm Babet. Houses adjacent to the site can no longer get buildings insurance due to the flooding. The Environment Agency's flood plain projection is being updated and some of this site will likely be included within the revised projection. This response was seconded by Cllr. A. Wright and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-09-04/7**

Cllr. A. Wright also noted that this site falls within the 'countryside' zone, not the 'town' zone and the applicants are relying on this being a 'cluster development'. However, in reality, the other houses are some distance away and this site would not arguably form part of the cluster.

10.3 Matters of report

A representative from Bellway Homes has asked for another meeting with the Town Council to give updates on their plans for the development site at Woodbridge Road.

The DTC has responded asking for more details and asking for the meeting to be towards the end of the month due to current workloads.

## **11. Communication, events and partnership committee**

11.1 The DTC provided an update on activities to celebrate and promote the Tour of Britain cycle race visiting the town on Sunday 8th September.

11.2 Cllr. P. Wraight gave a brief update on the Christmas event to be held on 23rd November. The working group next meets on 9th September and Cllr. Rose is working on a costs spreadsheet. The Business Co-Ordinator is starting to collect raffle prizes from local businesses.

11.3 Councillors Dean, Knights and A. Wraight will arrange a meeting to discuss the latest draft of the Town Trail.

11.4 The CEP Committee will consider the possibility of running a second website for tourism and events at its next meeting. Cllr. Eastwood has spoken with an Officer at East Suffolk Council and they would like an update on this by October.

11.5 There were no other matters of report.

## **12. Strategy & Development Committee**

### **12.1 Neighbourhood Plan Review**

Cllr. P. Wraight provided an update from the third meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Review (NPR) working group which focused on tourism, heritage and leisure. Two more members have joined the group and it is functioning very efficiently so far. Meetings with two possible consultancy firms have been arranged. The group will soon be considering the Housing Needs Survey and work is underway to complete the grant-funding application form.

12.2 The RFO provided an update from a meeting with the Scout & Guides on 27th August regarding the current CIL application and planning application. The CIL funds must be spent by 28th October and there are some issues with the planning application. It was agreed that the RFO will send the letter he has drafted to East Suffolk Council asking for an extension to spend the funds and to ask for a response within two weeks so that this can be considered at October's Council meeting. Cllr. Wraight confirmed that there are other CIL applications to consider at the next SAD committee meeting.

12.3 Cllr. P. Wraight provided an update from the Recovery and Resilience Meeting held on 28th August. A fee for the Amazi consultant to collate various comments on SCC's Section 19 Report and to give a presentation at the next public meeting is awaited. The next public meeting has been agreed as 17th November. The emergency response practise session will be held on 26th September.

12.4 There were no other matters of report.

## **13. Lands Committee**

13.1 There was some discussion on the ongoing ownership issues with the Bridge Street bus shelter. Councillors were frustrated that this issue has still not been resolved. The meeting was paused for Cllr. A. Wraight to apologise to Cllr Higham comments he had made Cllr. A. Wraight apologised. It was agreed to defer this issue to the next Land's committee meeting.

13.2 After discussion, it was also agreed to defer considering replacing the damaged bench that has been removed from this bus shelter to the next Lands committee meeting.

13.3 The Pageant Field CCTV camera service will also be deferred to the next Lands committee meeting.

13.4 Considering quotations to repair the basketball court will be deferred to the next Lands committee meeting.

13.5 Considering quotations to repair the Pageant Field fence will be deferred to the next Lands committee meeting.

13.6 There was some discussion about rats in the roundel closest to the pharmacy on the Market Hill. Cllr. Higham advised that this roundel is owned privately and that the Council has a record of who owns each roundel. The owner will be responsible for addressing the problem of the rats and the Town Council cannot carry out works on someone else's property.

13.7 Approaching Framlingham College to discuss their offer of volunteers for town projects and consider the possibility of using pupils to help in the cemetery will be deferred to the next Lands committee meeting.

13.8 Matters of report

Cllr. Eastwood has walked around the town's assets with the grounds contractor to review work completed since the contract commenced on 1st August. There are some queries with the contract and these need to be looked into.

There has been further correspondence complaining about the state of the memorial garden at the cemetery and the Lands Committee will continue to try and resolve this.

#### **14. Highways, Rights of Way & Parking Committee**

14.1 The latest Rights of Way Walk on 24<sup>th</sup> August went well despite the poor weather.

#### **15. Procedural**

15.1 *Considered after item 8.*

15.2 Cllr. Eastwood proposed adopting the Absence Management Policy with minor revisions. This was seconded by Cllr. Dean and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-09-04/8**

15.3 Cllr. Eastwood proposed adopting the Key Policy and creating a register of keyholders. This was seconded by Cllr. P. Wraight and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-09-04/9**

15.4 Consider changing the lock at the pavilion- this will be deferred to the next Land's committee meeting.

15.5 Cllr. Eastwood proposed accepting the exit procedures for departing Councillors with minor amendments. Cllr. Rose seconded this and it was carried unanimously **FCM-2024-09-04/10**

#### **16. Other matters of report**

Cllr. P. Wraight attended FAYAP's recent AGM.

#### **17. Issues to be raised at future Council or committee meetings:**

Future youth provision in the town (Strategy Committee)

**18. Cllr. Eastwood resolved to exclude the press and public from this section of the meeting by virtue of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2) due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.** This was seconded by Cllr. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-09-04/11**

*Residents left the meeting at this point and the online meeting was ended.*

**19. Cllr. Higham provided an update on some HR issues and reported that three complaints made to the Monitoring Officer have been dismissed.** It was agreed that Cllr. Cope should be involved in any future HR welfare visits.

20. **The date of the next Council meeting was confirmed as being Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October.** The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

Signed .....

Date .....