

Framlingham Town Council



Minutes of a Meeting of Framlingham Town Council held in the Castle Community Rooms Framlingham at 7pm on 2nd October 2024

1. Present & Apologies

Councillors Eastwood (Chair), Cope, Dean, Knights and Rose.

Apologies were received, and accepted, from Councillors P Wraight, A Wraight, Higham and Hammond.

2. In Attendance

Alan Davidson (Responsible Financial Officer) and 4 residents.

Apologies were received from the Deputy Town Clerk who was unwell and could not attend.

3. Changes to the Committee structure

The RFO reported that Cllr. A Wraight had resigned from the Lands Committee and Cllr. Hammond had joined the Strategy and Development and Communication, Events and Partnership committees and the HR sub-committee.

4. Minutes

Cllr. Eastwood proposed accepting the Minutes of 4th September as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Cope and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/1**

Cllr. Eastwood proposed accepting the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting on the 19th September as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Dean, with 4 in favour and 1 abstention. **FCM-2024-10-02/2**

5. Declarations of interest.

Cllr. Knights declared an interest in item 9.6ii.

ADJOURN

6. Public Forum

6.1 The RFO reported that the reports from the Police, district and county councillors would be circulated once received.

6.2 The representative from Hour Community noted that in 2012 the Council agreed to support being an “age friendly community”. Hour Community are assessing what this means and will be in contact with the Council.

The representative reported that Suffolk County Council had estimated that the population of Suffolk will grow by 7% in the next 20 years and that resident aged over 65 years will make up all of the increase. This will have serious implications for Framlingham.

The representative also raised concerns about an 85-year-old resident who is being harassed by people banging on their door 4 nights a week, causing distress for the resident. The Town Council expressed their concerns for the

resident and Cllr. Cope suggested that the Council could request residents to check their video doorbell footage to see if the incidents could be captured.

RECONVENE

7. Consider correspondence received

ESC confirmed that Cllr. Hammond had been elected unopposed in the election held on 10th October.

ESC has confirmed that the next election will be held on 21st November 2024

The Town Council noted the letter of thanks from the library for the recent small grant to purchase children's seating.

The Town Council noted confirmation from East Suffolk Council of the successful bid for the "East Suffolk Blooms" native bulbs. It was suggested that responsibility for planting the bulbs could be given to Cllr. Knights and the Tuesday Gardeners.

8. Procedural matters

8.1 Cllr. Eastwood read out comments provided by Cllr. Wraight which explained that the Council's Human Resources (HR) advisors had advised that the HR sub-committee should become a separate full committee to streamline the HR communication and activities undertaken by the sub-committee on behalf of the Council.

This was supported by Cllr. Dean. Cllr. Cope asked that the delegated authorities of the committee be reviewed by the Council to ensure they are in line with our expectations.

Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the HR sub-committee is changed to a full committee and that the terms of reference are brought back to the Council next month. This was seconded by Cllr. Dean and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/3**

8.2 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that Cllr. P Wraight is appointed as chair of the HR Committee. This was seconded by Cllr. Knights and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/4**

8.3 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that Cllr. P Wraight is appointed as the Framlingham Library representative. This was seconded by Cllr. Cope and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/5**

8.4 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that Cllr. Hammond is appointed as the chair of the Communication, events and partnership Committee. This was seconded by Cllr. Knights and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/6**

The RFO noted that Cllr. Hammond will also join the Finance Committee.

9. Finance and Human Resources Committee

Cllr Eastwood requested that item 9.2 was deferred until after item 13.1

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

9.3 The details of all bank accounts were noted.

9.4 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council approve spending up to £700 on a replacement laptop for the Deputy Clerk to be funded partly from the insurance claim proceeds plus the excess of £250 to be funded from code 1126 "computer equipment" This was seconded by Cllr. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/7**

The RFO left the meeting.

- 9.5 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council approve bringing all staff contracts under a single uniform contract and that a clause relating to pay progression be added to the contract: "subject to satisfactory performance, staff will progress automatically through the range in their salary scale by annual increments until they reach the maximum salary in the range." This was seconded by Cllr. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/8**

The RFO rejoined the meeting and Cllr. Knights left the meeting.

9.6 **Consider two small grant applications**

- i) Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council award £250 to the Tuesday gardeners for plants and compost for planting across the town centre. This was seconded by Cllr. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/9**

Cllr. Knights rejoined the meeting.

- ii) Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council award £250 to the Friends of St Michael's Church as a contribution towards the purchase of 40 trees for the Christmas tree festival. This was seconded by Cllr. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/10**

- 9.7 Matters of report
None.

10. Planning Committee

- 10.1 The following planning appeal was considered:
DC/245/3148/FUL

Cllr. Dean proposed that the Council supports this application and recommends that the applicant considers installing water butts, solar panels, an EV charging point and universal nesting bricks. This was seconded by Cllr. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/11**

- 10.2 Matters of report

A meeting Bellway Homes regarding the proposals for Woodbridge Road has been arranged for 11th November at 9:30am and all councillors are welcome to attend.

11. Communication, events and partnership committee

- 11.1 Cllr. Eastwood read out comments provided by Cllr. Wraight and Cllr. Hammond supporting the recommendation to create a second website for visitors. Cllr. Dean was also supportive and explained that the CEP Committee were asking for agreement in principle to investigate further the options and costs. Cllr. Cope noted that this was a good opportunity to "sell" the town and it was sensible to have a separate outward facing website.

The RFO said that concerns on the workload of Council staff on running two websites could be mitigated by ensuring that website maintenance was managed by the provider and staff focused on uploading content. This was likely to result in an ongoing support cost.

The Council agreed in principle and asked the CEP Committee to investigate and report back their findings.

- 11.2 The Council felt that switching the council website from a .com to a .gov.uk domain was pre-empting a forced change in the future. The RFO reported that the cost was £150 every 2 years which will be built into the budget.

Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council approves the transfer of the Framlingham.com website to Framlingham.gov.uk domain as per NALC's

recommendations and is used solely for Council business. This was seconded by Cllr. Cope and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/11**

The RFO agreed to look into the impact of switching the Council addresses to Framlingham.gov.uk.

11.3 Receive an update on the plans for the Christmas event on 23rd November

11.3.1 Cllr. Eastwood confirmed that the Christmas event is going ahead but on a reduced level. There will be an event from 2:30-5:30pm on Saturday 23rd November. This will include live music, Father Christmas, lanterns and the Christmas lights will be turned on. Cllr. Knights also noted that the Castle will open free to residents. Cllr. Rose provided an update on costs.

11.3.2 The Council had received 6 pledges of sponsorship for the Christmas event. Given the reputational risk in the light of the reduced event, it was agreed to discontinue the initiative. Cllr. Eastwood requested that the CEP Committee contact the sponsors and thank them for their support.

11.4 Remembrance Day.

Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council approves spending up to £700 on traffic management costs associated with the road closure for the Remembrance Day event, if necessary, funded from code 1136 'Remembrance Day'. This was seconded by Cllr. Dean and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/12**

11.5 Matters of report.

Cllr. Dean reported on spend approved by the CEP including £144 per annum on purchasing 11 URLs and £35 per annum on the Purple guide to event health and safety.

Cllr. Eastwood reported that Mr Terry Hunt DL will be attending Remembrance Sunday as the representative of the Lord Lieutenant.

Cllr. Eastwood also reported that there is a meeting to looking at the town trial designs on 5th October.

12. Strategy & Development Committee

12.1 Neighbourhood Plan Review

12.1.1 Cllr. Eastwood read out comments provided by Cllr. P Wraight. After a selection process, the working group had selected Rachel Leggett and Associates as the planning consultant to the review.

The estimated timeframe is 18 months and this coincides with the East Suffolk Council plan revision.

12.1.2 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council approves the selection of Rachel Leggett and Associates as the planning consultants for the Neighbourhood Plan Review. This was seconded by Cllr. Dean and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/13**

12.2 The Recovery and Resilience practical incident response session had been held on 26th September. The session demonstrated that the team is prepared and there are only minor issues to fix.

The Council thanked former Cllrs. Kitching and Benbow for their support in preparing and running the session

12.3 Matters of report.

None

13. Lands Committee

- 13.1 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council approve ESSL (formerly Norse) cleaning services emptying 4 dog bins and litter picking on the Fens at a cost of £1,502.80 compared to £1,845 in 2023/24, funded from 1647 'Street Cleaning Services'. This was seconded by Cllr. Dean, with 4 in favour and 1 abstention. **FCM-2024-10-02/14.**
- 13.2 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council approve accepting the quote of £875 plus VAT to repair the hole and kerbing of the basketball court surface to be funded from 1503 "play equipment repairs" and the ear-marked reserve for play equipment repairs. This was seconded by Cllr. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/15**
- 13.3 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council approve accepting the quote of £700 plus VAT to repair the play area fence to be funded from the ear-marked reserve for play equipment repairs. This was seconded by Cllr. Dean and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/16**
- 13.4 Cllr. Knights and Cope offered to help tidy the Pavilion.
- 13.5 The RFO reported that the Council are now in a position to proceed installing a bench in the bus shelter and there was no requirement to seek a lease or change in ownership. A quote had been received from the Men's Shed which will need to be assessed by the Lands Committee to ensure it is sympathetic and the district councillors who are providing funding. Cllr Knights expressed concern that as winter was approaching it was important to progress as soon as possible.
- Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council approve accepting the quote of £650 to repair the bus shelter bench subject to review by all the Lands Committee and the district councillors. This was seconded by Cllr. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/17**
- 13.6 Matters of report
- Cllr. Cope asked about the situation with the playground on Kings Avenue. Cllr Eastwood explained that the playground was owned by East Suffolk Council and that the town council had offered to make a contribution to help with the repairs.
- Item 9.2 was then debated.
- 9.2 Cllr. Eastwood proposed approving the payment of current invoices as circulated plus two late invoices not included on the schedule: 24/021024 £451.01 and 25/021024 for £380.00, both payable to the contractor. This was seconded by Cllr. Dean and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/18**

14. Highways, Rights of Way & Parking Committee

- 14.1 Matters of report
- Cllr. Eastwood reported that the Council has been copied into the Thomas Mills High School request for improved road signage and this will be discussed at the next HRP Committee.
- Cllr. Eastwood reported that the new lights had been installed on Fairfield Crescent and the Fens bridge but the Council are stilling waiting for the power to be connected.

15. Other matters of report

- Cllr. Eastwood had attended the opening of the new flood lights at Framlingham Town TC.

Cllr. Knights reported that she had written to the Co-op supermarket about the state of the riverside riverbank and that the Co-op had responded positively and carried some tidying up of the riverbank.

16. Issues to be raised at future Council or committee meetings:

Cllr. P Wraight has requested to attend the next CEP Committee.

Cllr. P Wraight has suggested that the Council organise a Christmas meal. This will be circulated to all councillors to assess interest.

The SAD Committee to assess whether video doorbell footage can be used and to promote greater awareness to residents.

The future of the former J Grosse site on Station Road to be raised at the SAD Committee.

17. The Council resolved to exclude the press and public by virtue of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2) for this meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

18. Human Resources

18.1 The Council received updates from the HR sub-committee on current issues.

18.2 The Council considered the HR issue workflow schematic and timelines.

18.3 Cllr. Eastwood reported that it had been difficult to find a solution to the office workload issue. The Council agreed to trial switching to having 2 full council meetings a month instead of a full set of committee meetings and allow the Council to focus on the most important and pressing issues. The RFO requested that the October Finance Committee still takes place as the last meeting had been held in June. Cllr. Dean suggested that if a matter needed a lot of attention, then a special committee could be convened.

Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council holds no committee meetings apart from the October Finance Committee and will try to organise a full Council meeting on 16th October and aim for two full councils meetings per month for the foreseeable future. This was seconded by Cllr. Cope and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/19**

The RFO left the meeting.

18.3 Cllr. Eastwood proposed that the Council an award of 1 scale point salary grade increase for the deputy town clerk, the RFO and the office assistant back dated to 1 April 2024. This was seconded by Cllr. Rose and carried unanimously. **FCM-2024-10-02/20**

The RFO rejoined the meeting.

20. The date of the next Council meeting was confirmed as being Wednesday 16th October. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.21pm.

Signed

Date