



## FRAMSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

***All Councillors are reminded of their obligations under the Code of Conduct Regulations.***

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at Framsdén Village Hall

Attendance	Dominic Vaughan (DV)	Glen Buckingham (GB)	Neil Mellor (NM)
	Claire Macauley (CM)	Nicola Whitmore (NW)	Ian Seager (IS)
	Sarah Clare (Clerk)	Matthew Hicks (MH) County Councillor	Nick Hardingham (NH) District Councillor

Public present at the meeting: 1

### FPC 23-04-01 Appointment of Chair

The Clerk asked for nominations for the office of Chair.

GB was nominated as Chair by CM, DV seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**

The acceptance of office form was signed

### FPC 23-04-02 Apologies for Absence

None

### FPC 23-04-03 Declaration of Interests

CM & GB both declared interest in FPC 23-04-11 a) iii) as named directors of Sustainable Framsdén CIC.

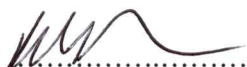

### FPC 23-04-04 To consider Applications for Dispensation on Declarations of Interest as Received

The Clerk disclosed that dispensation applications had been received for all Council members as listed:

- i. Councillor Glenn Buckingham (GB) – matters relating to Asbach House (formerly the Dobermann Inn) & the setting of Budget & Precept for Framsdén Parish Council  
DV proposed permitting the dispensation, CM seconded, all voted in favour
- ii. Councillor Nicola Deller-Whitmore (NW) - matters relating to Asbach House (formerly the Dobermann Inn) & the setting of Budget & Precept for Framsdén Parish Council  
GB proposed permitting the dispensation, DV seconded, all voted in favour
- iii. Councillor Claire Macauley (CM) - matters relating to Asbach House (formerly the Dobermann Inn) & the setting of Budget & Precept for Framsdén Parish Council  
GB proposed permitting the dispensation, IS seconded, all voted in favour
- iv. Councillor Neil Mellor (NM) - The setting of Budget & Precept for Framsdén Parish Council  
NW proposed permitting the dispensation, GB seconded, all voted in favour
- v. Councillor Ian Seager (IS) - matters relating to Asbach House (formerly the Dobermann Inn) & the setting of Budget & Precept for Framsdén Parish Council  
NM proposed permitting the dispensation, NW seconded, all voted in favour
- vi. Councillor Dominic Vaughan (DV) - matters relating to Asbach House (formerly the Dobermann Inn) & the setting of Budget & Precept for Framsdén Parish Council  
IS proposed permitting the dispensation, NM seconded all voted in favour

with reasoning given in each case that:

- a) Without dispensation the number of persons unable to participate in the transaction of business would be so great as to impede the transaction of the business, and;
- b) The dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area

Signed  (Chair of meeting authorising minutes) Signed  (Clerk)

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In a sequence of six separate votes, it was proposed, seconded and agreed that dispensations be granted to GB, NW, CM, NM, IS and DV as requested. The Clerk will process these applications accordingly and inform the Monitoring Officer at the District Council

FPC 23-04-05 Public Forum

None

FPC 23-04-06 To Receive District Councillor's Report – District Councillor Nick Hardingham (NH)

Newly elected District Councillor Nick Hardingham introduced himself to the Council, reporting that the Green Party was very pleased with the election outcome. There are lots of ideas being bounced about and it will take time to set priorities and see the ideas filter down to a practical level in the county. One of the keystone features of the Green campaign had been to ensure that housing meets the needs of the communities and that appropriate infrastructure is put in place to support this. Another important area that will be looked at is how to improve access to public transport in rural communities, ensuring that services are economic and convenient to use.

More immediate improvements are looking to improve the telephony system at the District Council to avoid frustrating waits when members of the public are directed incorrectly, along with looking at energy efficiency measures in the housing stock across the District. There are also plans to organise more community litter picks, with the aim of improving the appearance of the District and making people proud to live in Mid Suffolk.

The Green Party has also expressed concerns about the way in which the elections were managed, particularly in relation to the new requirement for voters to have photo ID. It is understood that some people were unable to vote as they had the wrong kind of ID, but getting accurate figures is difficult, as at some polling stations people were being advised and turned away outside the venue, with figures only being recorded if they actually got to the monitoring officer's desk.

NH reminded the Council that there are still schemes operating to help with the cost of living, including a range of community grants in the pipeline that will be publicised soon. It was noted that Framsdon may benefit from these Community Development grants with a view to the proposed improvements to the Village Hall

GB raised a query about whether there was a home insulation scheme being offered by District as he understood there was one at County level – NH was not sure how this will match up, but will be looking at a way to link it up to benefit homes in Mid Suffolk.

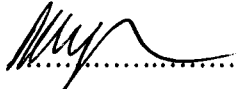
DV expressed concerns about the Green Party plans to arrange working parties of volunteers to clean road signs as it was understood that this aspect of the Village Litter Pick had been stopped due to Health & Safety concerns from Suffolk Highways. NH will look into this and report back.

GB noted the number of dilapidated road signs in the District, in particular the abandoned posts at Peats Corner, asking NH to prompt Suffolk Highways to come and remove them as they are an eyesore.

CM raised the issue of the lack of broadband provision in the village, particularly at the Otley end, and how this matches up with planning permissions being recently granted for residential properties in areas with no access to a reasonable broadband connection, when this is essential infrastructure in the modern world. NH again promised that this is something that would be looked at in due course.

NW asked for help in finding out why the bin collections in Framsdon are so regularly either severely delayed, or missed altogether. NH will take this matter up with the relevant department.

Finally, GB asked NH to look into the District's long term plans for the land at Tollgate Corner. A brief history of the approximately 2 acre plot was outlined, the land is currently owned by the District Council, but the Parish Council is interested in possibly using the area for a community orchard or community garden. CM agreed to forward all the information that she had on the matter to NH, so that he could investigate.

Signed  (Chair of meeting authorising minutes)

Signed  (Clerk)

FPC 23-04-07 To Receive County Councillor's Report – County Councillor Matthew Hicks

The County Councillor's Report for April had been received, circulated to the Council and posted on the village website [www.framsden.onesuffolk.net](http://www.framsden.onesuffolk.net)

MHi brought attention to the following:

The May report would be coming out soon, but will necessarily be a bit lighter than usual due to the moratorium period surrounding the election. In the meantime, the April report gives lots of details about the current state of Special Educational Needs Provision (SEND) in the County and what is being done to improve the lived experiences for families.

The Foxhall waste site has just re-opened after a refurbishment, including the re-use shop. MHi encouraged all to take a look at the re-use shop as there are lots of bargains to be had and all money raised at the site goes to help fund children's services in the County. GB asked whether other household waste sites (such as Stowmarket), could also have re-use shops. MHi explained it was simply down to a lack of space that this had not been rolled out in other places, but goods are salvaged from other sites and taken to Foxhall.

Trading standards are working hard at the ports and it is important to remember the old adage that if something seems too good to be true it probably is. Everyone is reminded that if something is being sold exceptionally cheaply it may have serious safety issues.

CM again raised the issue of better broadband in the village. MHi explained that unfortunately the current Openreach project is now finished, but there is likely to be a new project – EcoBit – which will be delivered by County Broadband soon.

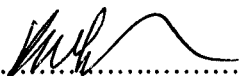

GB asked MHi about a situation where temporary traffic lights had been left in situ after the work on the road had completed, it was very frustrating for people to see the road closed off, yet no work taking place. MHi explained that the utility companies can apply for up to five days to do their work, although it is often completed more quickly, the issue arises when the utility companies do not then tell the road contractors that the road can be reopened. GB asked whether the additional cost of running the traffic lights is coming from public funds. MHi confirmed that such works are fully funded by the utility companies, so there is no burden on the public purse.

FPC 23-04-08 Minutes of previous meetings

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 as a true and accurate record, were proposed by CM, seconded by DV and **WERE SO RESOLVED**. The Minutes were signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

FPC 23-04-09 Matters Arising and Action Points from 23<sup>rd</sup> March minutes

- 9.1 Look into Councillor training options for IS. ONGOING – SALC have instigated a new system of training, including refresher course for existing Councillors post-election, all Councillors have been invited to take up the short form training. SALC have advised that the full training is currently being restructured and dates will be released later in the year.
- 9.2 Meet with Sutcliffe contractor to address poor groundwork and snagging issues at the Play Area. To be discussed later in meeting.
- 9.3 Check prices for standard annual play area inspections with the different providers. To be discussed later in meeting
- 9.4 Publish reviewed policies as agreed on the village website. DISCHARGED
- 9.5 Check remedial work to the kitchen steps and report back to the Parish Council. DISCHARGED
- 9.6 Prepare draft letter in response to the ACV appeal outcome and circulate to Councillors, once majority approval is given, send letter to the District Council. DISCHARGED – No response received to date. The Clerk will provide a copy of the letter to NH, so that he can explore what options are available. IS asked if the District Council has any powers of compulsory purchase if the building was likely to be in danger of collapse. NH was uncertain and would look into this and report back. GB will get the Community Benefits Society to get in touch with NH to fill in the plans as they currently stand.

Signed  (Chair of meeting authorising minutes) Signed  (Clerk)

9.7 Arrange to transfer to the agreed electricity contract. DISCHARGED

FPC 23-04-10 Planning

a) To consider planning applications that had been submitted since the last meeting:

- i. DC/23/01423 – Planning Application. Change of use from Class F1(a) to Class E(c). Internal and external works to existing school house to provide office accommodation. Replace and extend existing oil-fired boiler and heating distribution system, widen external doors, remove exterior canopy, remove exterior fencing, remove short section of low brick wall, remove shed. Helmingham Primary School, School Road, IP14 6EX

Councillors had all studied the application in advance of the meeting. After discussion it was decided to submit an **OBJECTION** to the application based on the following:

- Concerns were raised about whether this change of use is a good idea in the long term as population fluctuates and the school may need the space for pupils in the future.

CM proposed, NW seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.**

b) To consider any planning applications which have been submitted since agenda published: None

c) Updates and outcomes on previous planning applications:

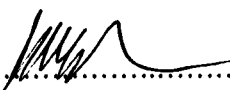
- i. APP/W3520/Y/22/3306969 – Potash Farm, Ashfield Road, IP14 6LR – Works to propose erection of porch to front. Insertion of 2 no. roof windows and alteration/replacement of 2 no. windows to rear. Removal of partition wall and widening of an opening. Insertion of bi-fold doors following removal of French doors to side - Appeal discharged.

d) To consider suggested road names for Red House Farm development – After discussion it was agreed that the naming of the street to reference the original tenant William Birch was a good historical reference. However, Councillors were quite uncomfortable with the idea of the individual plots being named after the war dead of the village. It was felt that unless the relatives to these people could be contacted to ensure that they are happy, then alternative names should be sought for the plot names. It is unclear why these four names in particular have been singled out from the Framsdén War Memorial and relatives of those who have not been given this dubious 'honour' may feel slighted.

FPC 23-04-11 Parish Council Activities & Projects

a) VHMC Report to include:

- i. Update on application to Suffolk ProHelp – NM nothing to update at the moment, waiting for a call back from nominated architect. NM will chase up.
- ii. Use of Noticeboards at the Village Hall – NM explained this not about the main Parish Council noticeboard, but the small board that is available for community use, as the volunteer who looks after the board has been finding it difficult to manage, suggesting a larger board is required. CM queried about the permanence of some notices, the board should be used to advertise village events and notices cleared away once the event has taken place. After discussion it was agreed that the VHMC would liaise with Framsdén Fundraisers to see if this community board was something that they would consider helping with.
- iii. Consideration of Expression of Interest by Sustainable Framsdén CIC on behalf of the Parish Council to look at installing an Electric Vehicle Charging Point at the Village Hall – When the Village Hall Team had recently met a suggestion had been put forward that it may be worth looking at this holistically as an overall refurbishment to the car park. Questions also needed to be asked about whether there was any realistic need in the village for an EV charging point to be installed. CM explained that this was simply a part of the process and it was about future proofing the village. Sustainable Framsdén CIC has suggested that the installation of an EV charging point should be done alongside getting Photovoltaic (PV) panels for the roof of the Village Hall. The next stage of such a development is to carry out a site visit and arrange for a formal assessment. DV proposed that this is arranged at the earliest available date, NM seconded, two voted in favour, 2 abstained due to declared interest and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.**

Signed  (Chair of meeting authorising minutes)

Signed  (Clerk)

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- iv. Repair/replacement of damaged chairs – After the last cleaning party it was noted that there are several damaged chairs. The Village Hall team have carried out temporary repairs with tape to keep the chairs in use. However, the Council may want to consider purchasing some replacement chairs. The first preference would be to repair and reuse with help from the Debenham Men's Shed as otherwise each chair will cost £36.65 + VAT each (about £628 + VAT in total with all needing to be replaced). After discussion it was agreed to wait until the Mens' Shed have had a chance to look at a chair and see if it something they can help with before making a final decision.
- v. Resourcing/membership of the Village Hall Management Committee – NM explained that it is quite onerous on only three people who look after the hall and that this model is not sustainable to keep going, more help is needed, either from the Council or from the wider public. After discussion two actions were agreed:
  - i. All councillors need to think about whether there is anyone in the village who would be likely to respond to an in-person approach for help.
  - ii. A list of specific tasks that are required needs to be drawn up, so that people do not feel that they are volunteering into an unknown capacity. Once the list has been drawn up it can be circulated to the Council and once approved circulated to the wider village.


This item will be put back on the agenda for the next meeting for further discussion.

During discussion about the resourcing of the management team, the issue of whether the hire charges are sufficient to meet the increasing costs of running the Village Hall were also discussed. CM queried about the use of the Hall by the Church. Looking at the lease it was confirmed that the Parochial Church Council had the right to use the hall on terms that are the same "in all material aspects as the terms on which others use the hall" for up to 36 days per year. The VHMC (which includes the booking clerk) will review the hire charges and the matter will be taken forward to the next meeting for further consideration.

- b) Update on Energy Audit Match Funding – CM had worked with Sustainable Framdsen CIC to put together a bid and updated the Council that the matter is ongoing.
- c) Update on Play Area – snagging/completion/request for part payment of the outstanding bill – IS and CM had met with the contractors and they have conceded that the work is not satisfactory, it is unclear at present when the remedial works will take place.
- d) Consideration of which organisation to instruct for future Play Area inspections – The Clerk confirmed that the District Council had confirmed that the price for a standard annual inspection through their scheme would be £53.15 + VAT, this contrasts with the price quoted by Playsafe (who had carried out the Post Installation Inspection) of £252 + VAT.

NW proposed instructing the District Council to carry out the annual inspection, NM seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will make arrangements.

- e) Report on Kings Coronation Events – GB reported about 60 people attended the firepit event, with consensus of opinion being that it had all gone very well. A full debrief has not yet taken place with the team, but they are looking for photos of the event to record the occasion. The Big Lunch and the Volunteering Day had also been well supported, with specific thanks received for the mowing that had taken place in St Johns Row.
- f) Discussion regarding land at Tollgate Corner – This matter had been dealt with during the public forum and the question raised to the District Councillor.
- g) Re-adoption of Councillor Code of Conduct – The Clerk reported that there had been no changes to the code since it had been adopted in May 2022, but it was good practice for Councils to re-adopt each year. CM proposed re-adoption, DV seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will publish accordingly on the village website.

Signed ...  ..... (Chair of meeting authorising minutes)

Signed ..  ..... (Clerk)

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FPC 23-04-12 Finance


- a) To review the Financial Statement for the month, as supplied by the Clerk - The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Statement for May. There were no queries. CM proposed acceptance, NM seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chair signed the corresponding Bank Statements to confirm the figures.
- b) To approve CIL Statement for period 2022-2023 for submission – Following circulation and consideration, CM proposed the submission, GB seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will arrange for the CIL Statement to be submitted and published on the website.
- c) To approve Annual Governance Statement for Accounting Period 2022-2023 – Following circulation and consideration of the Governance Statement, DV proposed approval, IS seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the forms on behalf of the Council and the Clerk will publish the AGAR on the village website
- d) To approve the Accounting Statements for 2022-2023 following Internal Audit – Following consideration of the Accounting Statements as provided by the Clerk, DV proposed approval, CM seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the forms on behalf of the Council, the Clerk will publish the Accounting Statements on the village website
- e) To accept Internal Auditors Report – NM proposed acceptance, NW seconded all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**.
- f) To appoint Internal Auditor for 2023-2024 – It was agreed to appoint J. Shea Auditing as the Internal Auditor for 2023-2024. CM proposed, IS seconded all voted in favour **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**.
- g) To agree payments as detailed on Payment Schedule - IS proposed authorisation, NM seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will set up payments accordingly.

FPC 23-04-13 Matters of urgency to be brought to the attention of the Council

- a) The Clerk advised that the grass cutter had completed three probationary cuts to the satisfaction of IS and GB and had therefore been instructed continue for the rest of the season, as per the terms agreed at the March meeting of the Parish Council
- b) Items for next agenda:
  - VHMC volunteers
  - Hire charges for the Village Hall

Items for the July Agenda – please notify the Clerk of any further items for the agenda as soon as possible and by Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July at the latest, with any accompanying paperwork ready to be circulated with the agenda upon publication.

There being no further business requiring the attention of the Parish Council, the meeting was closed at 9.20pm. The next Parish Council meeting is set for **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023** at 7.30pm, in Framsdon Village Hall

Signed  ..... (Chair of meeting authorising minutes)

Signed  ..... (Clerk)

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