

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an extra-ordinary meeting of Fransham Parish Council held on Tuesday 6th September 2022, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Richard Watts (Chair)
Cllr Russell James (Vice Chair)
Cllr James Sheringham
Cllr Emma Spratt
Cllr Andrew Lake
Cllr Gerry Taylor

Will Sealey, Community Liaison Officer, Vattenfall
Two members of the public.
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies were received from District & County Cllr Kiddle-Morris.

2. To note the resignation of Cllr Drewitt.

The Chairman reported the resignation of Cllr Drewitt and recognised the important work he had carried out on behalf of the Council.

The vacancy has been advertised and a potential candidate was in attendance at the meeting; it was anticipated that a new member would be co-opted at the next meeting.

3. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

4. Open Forum for Public Participation.

A member of the public queried when the results of the survey would be published and was informed that the minutes of this meeting will be published with all the information.

5. To receive an input from a Vattenfall Representative regarding the Community Fund.

The officer reported that the two wind farms had been approved and onshore works will commence soon, installing the underground cable to Necton.

A £15M Community Fund will be available, the criteria being that any application should be based in Norfolk, be sustainable and climate smart and community based, for example, shared heating networks, village hall heating, electric bus routes. The fund will go live in 2024 and be administered by a Local Charity, talks are ongoing with the Norfolk Community Foundation.

Concerns were raised by councillors that any requirements in Fransham will not meet the criteria and Fransham will miss out, and this will be echoed in many smaller communities along the cable route. The impact of the construction, with increased traffic, noise etc, will not be compensated.

The officer said mitigation was being put in place with traffic calming measures, tree planting and screening but no specific funds were being allocated to communities along the cable route. However, many small projects can be adapted to be sustainable and therefore meet the criteria.

Concerns were also raised that larger communities, such as Dereham and Swaffham, would have the resources to put together an application, which Fransham does not. A suggestion was raised that there should be three levels of application, with the smaller applications not requiring as much detail as the larger schemes.

The officer said that the Foundation would provide administrative and expert support and smaller communities can join together and submit a joint application.

Suggestions such as improved internet/mobile reception, connections to mains sewage, improved public transport were raised and the officer said that these could possibly be adapted to be a sustainable application and nothing is ruled out at this stage.

The officer confirmed the parish council will be kept updated with the process as it takes shape.

The Chairman said that perhaps the survey should have taken place following this, however, it was hoped that some of the ideas put forward could be taken forward. He thanked the officer for attending.

6. To consider the responses to the Village Survey.

Council considered all responses to the survey as listed below:

- Solar panels on Village Hall, with link to immersion heater, for instant hot water, solar panels on VH field for Village Hall & Church – Council agreed this could be considered suitable for Vattenfall funding and for the Village Hall to take forward, with the support of the Parish Council.
- Grit Bin by old Railway Station, Station Road – Council had previously tried to take this idea forward but Highways will not approve, accordingly, this idea will not be progressed.
- Bottle Bank at Village Hall – Council agreed there was no need as there is a bank at the Canary & Linnet, with proceeds coming to the Parish Council.
- Extension to trod to hard pavement – this issue is currently ongoing but also could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.
- A47 street lights turned off at 11.00pm (or halved). Turned on again at 7.00am in winter – Council noted that many of the lights are not working, and had not been for some time, despite being reported to National Highways. It was challenging dealing with National

Highways and this suggestion was not likely to be go anywhere, that being the case, this idea will not be progressed.

- Pedestrian flyover A47 – Council agreed a flyover would not be approved but agreed to take forward a pedestrian crossing idea, despite this being rejected by National Highways in the past. The matter will be added to the next ordinary council agenda and taken forward.
- Footpath between Spicers Corner to existing footpath on north of A47 – Council agreed this idea could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.
- Improvements to footpath behind Gt Fransham church and other footpaths – Council agreed that footpath improvements could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.
- Rewild both churchyards, include community volunteers – Council agreed that wildflower areas are extremely difficult to manage and visitors to the churches complain when the grounds are not kept neat and tidy and, that being the case, will not progress this idea.
- Rubbish Bin in Lay-by near seat – Council noted that the bin in that location previously encouraged litter as it was used as a dumping ground for waste, this is not the case since it was removed and, that being the case, Council will not progress this idea.
- Seat in shade opposite Canary & Linnet – Council agreed this idea could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.
- Village Clock – corner of Station Road – Council could not see any advantages to this and will not progress this idea.
- Better broadband – Council agreed this idea could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.
- Hedgerows cut back more regularly – Council noted that many of the hedges in Fransham were adjacent to farmland and therefore the responsibility of landowners. In addition, landowners could not cut back before September because of nesting birds and, additionally, were now encouraged not to cut as regularly as before. That being the case, Council will not progress this idea.
- Mains drainage - Council agreed this idea could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.
- Investment scheme for Church grass cutting – Council agreed that the current system in place works well and, that being the case, will not progress this idea.
- Mobile Phone 4/5G - Council agreed this idea could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.
- Improvements to low water pressure – Council agreed this idea could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.

- Electric – too many power cuts – Council agreed that the power supply was much improved in recent years but cuts must still be expected in extreme weather conditions. That being the case, Council will not progress this idea.
- Make gas available to village – Council agreed that in the current climate, this idea was not sustainable or climate smart and will not progress this idea.
- Weight restrictions on Station Road – this issue is ongoing and being progressed in ordinary council meetings.
- Children’s Play Park – Council noted that this idea had been considered before but the lack of a suitable site always being the problem, with the Village Hall field being too far from most of the population. However, Council agreed to keep this idea live for the time being as Vattenfall may be able to assist with purchase/rent of a suitable plot.
- Public transport improvements – Council agreed this idea could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.
- Parent/Toddler Group at Village Hall (with volunteer) – the volunteer will be put in touch with the Village Hall Committee to take this idea forward. Some grant funding may be available from the Parish Council for the purchase of equipment.
- Close Industrial Area on Beeston Road – Council agreed this idea was not feasible and would not progress this idea.
- Group activities at Village Hall – music, coffee morning, darts, quizzes, table tennis etc – these suggestions will be passed onto the Village Hall Committee to take forward.
- Strong leadership and vision from Parish Council – the parishioner who suggested this will be invited to Council meetings.
- Secure cycle stands and bench at Village Hall – Council agreed this idea could be suitable for Vattenfall funding.
- Professional Evaluation of Village Needs – Council considered the recent survey adequate and will not progress this idea.

In respect of the ideas considered suitable for Vattenfall funding, the Council will now await further information before taking these forward. Other ongoing matters will continue to be progressed at ordinary council meetings.

Council were grateful to everyone who responded to the survey, with some interesting suggestions to take forward.

A member of the public suggested a Fransham Facebook page to promote the Village Hall etc and agreed to liaise with the Village Hall Committee.

A member of the public suggested the ideas were too small and Council should liaise with neighbouring communities to work together for some big ideas.

7. To note the next meeting of Fransham Parish Council will be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 20th September 2022 in the Village Hall.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming, the date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.35pm.

Signed:

Date:
