

# FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2017 AT 7.30 P.M. IN FARNHAM COMMON VILLAGE HALL

### Present

Mr. Trevor Clapp (Chairman)	Mr. Richard Thomas
Mr. Roger Home	Mr. Clive Robinson
Mr. Brian Bilgorri	Mr. Bob Milne
Mrs. Vicky Thompson	Mr. Paul Rowley
Mrs. Judy Tipping	Mrs. Marilyn Rolfe (from 16/162/PC)
Mrs. Hilda Holder – Clerk	

Nine members of the public including District Councillor Dhillon.

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30pm. The meeting was adjourned for OPEN FORUM noted at the end of these minutes. The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

### 16/157/PC Apologies for absence

Mr. John Hodges, County Councillor Hazell and District Councillors Lewis and Anthony.

### 16/158/PC Minutes of the meetings held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2016

These were **approved** and signed by the Chairman.

### 16/159/PC Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

159.1 Mr. Bilgorri asked about the defibrillators. The Clerk confirmed they were in the office and she was waiting for our contractor to collect and install them. Mr. Bilgorri agreed to let Lloyds the Chemist know this was likely to happen in the next few weeks.

159.2 Mr. Milne said he had received a copy of the lease relating to the Sports ground. He could confirm that the Council did have a right to lay a track within a 15 foot width for vehicles and people to use.

159.3 Mr. Rowley enquired what works had been undertaken in Mayflower Way following the recent notification from BCC. He had received reports that vans had turned up but then left. Mr. Bilgorri advised that small patches of footway had been laid with tarmac. Mr. Home noted that the BCC website claimed ongoing patching work would take place until October 2018. It was also noted that there didn't seem to have been a problem removing the surface which was the reason given why the original scheduled work couldn't take place. The Clerk was asked to clarify with BCC and Cllr. Hazell.

159.4 Mr. Robinson confirmed he had been able to agree sites for locations of cabinets with Virgin Media and work along the Broadway had started already.

### 16/160/PC To agree a co - option policy

The Clerk had drafted and circulated a co-option policy to clarify procedures. This would help especially if ever there were more than one candidate applying for one vacancy.

**It was agreed** to adopt the draft Co-option policy.

### **16/161/PC To co-opt Mrs. Marilyn Rolfe**

The Clerk had circulated Mrs. Rolfe's brief resume. **It was unanimously agreed** to co-opt Mrs. Rolfe onto the Council for Farnham Royal Central Ward. She signed her declaration of acceptance of office and took her seat on the Council.

### **16/162/PC To approve works on Boundary Copse requested by BCC to alleviate flooding in Bishops Orchard**

Mr. Youel reported that he had been dealing with BCC over the issue of flooding in Bishops Orchard since 2013 and agreed to continue despite no longer being on the Council. The project had stalled through withdrawn funding but was now revived provided work could start in this financial year. Having considered all options he believed that BCC had put the best solution forward to alleviate flooding for residents. The idea was to put in new pipework to lead the water into Boundary Copse where water tends to collect in winter to form a pond. He did not believe this would affect the paths and BCC had said no trees should be damaged. It would be fully funded by BCC who would reinstate any damage at the entry point to the copse caused by their machinery. SBDC as landlords had given their consent already. **It was agreed** to support this initiative provided that for health and safety reasons BCC put up a sign alongside the 'pond' area to say the area was liable to flooding.

### **16/163/PC To agree a specification for works and tendering process under the devolution contract to side out all footways and restore all verges in the parish**

Mr. Home had prepared a specification of the hedging and siding out works that needed undertaking along the A355. He noted that any works must take place before the end of February because of the nesting season although licenses could be obtained to work at other times. This would require a considerable capital outlay but it was hoped future works would then be largely maintenance. It was noted that the Council might be cutting some private hedges but that in this instance it was better to undertake all the works required and this would help identify ownership of hedges for the future by revealing boundary markers. The Clerk was asked to send the document to Capability Landscapes Ltd, Whitby Partnership Ltd and Amersham Town Council for tender requiring a return date of two weeks and work to take place before the end of February. Mr. Home and Mr. Milne were given delegated authority to make the final decision on the tender process provided the budget did not exceed £15,000. Mr. Robinson noted that the LAF may be able to offer some financial support. The Clerk was asked to submit the specification document to the LAF.

### **16/164/PC To agree emergency siding out works**

Mr. Home noted that a particular stretch of footway between Church Road and the Slough border was in a bad state. A quote of £100 had been received from our contractor to remove the mud from the footway. **It was agreed** to proceed to clear this footway as soon as possible.

**16/165/PC To consider ways of improving the grass verge opposite the junction of One Pin Lane and the A355**

Mr. Johnny Ball explained that BT engineers had extended the kerb outside his house to provide parking space when servicing the BT junctions located there. However it catches water and there is usually a large puddle outside his house. He has pointed out that a soak away is needed but been told it is low on the pecking order. **It was agreed** that the Council should pursue TfB about the soak away issue.

**16/166/PC To consider the state of the war memorial and agree a budget for obtaining a condition report**

The Clerk reported that grants were available until 2018 to renovate war memorials. Mr. Robinson and Mrs. Tipping agreed to inspect the war memorial and report back if they felt work needed doing. Mrs. Tipping noted that the war memorial was listed.

**16/167/PC To agree list of Infrastructure priorities as requested by BCC**

The following infrastructure priorities were noted in the following order. Cleaning out the drains along the A355; removing the double yellow lines outside Sainsburys; resurfacing the Mayflower Way footpath; repairing the footway along the Broadway particularly outside the post office and car park; raising the dropped kerb in the Broadway outside Sainsburys; reinstating the One Pin Lane ditch near Walnut Tree House; clearing drains along Templewood Lane; resurfacing Holly Close; installing dropped kerbs in Victoria Road.

**16/168/PC Finance:**

168.1 Payments and receipts, as per the cashbook circulated prior to the meeting were **approved.**

168.2 Mr. Clapp reported on the recommendations of the Finance Committee regarding the Precept for 2017/18. He said the current precept was £120,750 which was a 5% increase on the year before with band D tax payers paying £39.67 in 2016/17 towards the precept. He noted the Council's obligations under the Devolution contract might require a capital investment of around £15,000 and that contributions from BCC for ongoing maintenance were expected to dwindle or cease in two years. He also noted that two major projects had no budgets at present. The Finance Committee were recommending that in order to pay for the capital outlay and future ongoing maintenance required by the devolution contract, the Precept be increased to £138,000 which would result in an increase to band D tax payers of £5.17 being a total of £44.83 per annum. This compared well with neighbouring parishes whose precepts were almost double this amount and more. In addition the Finance Committee recommended that £30,000 of reserves be ringfenced for expenditure on the Kingsway Green and Guide Hut projects.

168.3 Mr. Robinson noted that this was a 14% rise in the precept and suggested that the increase in the precept be limited to £130,000 but accepted that £30,000 of reserves should be ringfenced for projects. Mr Clapp noted that the effect of this would be to reduce reserves further than £30,000 as there would be a shortfall in the budget to cover devolution costs. He added he believed residents had indicated that they were prepared

to pay a little more to see real improvements to services. Mr. Milne emphasized that the precept to date only met the Council's costs and that the increase was necessary to cover devolution commitments. **It was agreed** by a majority of nine members to increase the precept to £138,000 and to ring fence £30,000 of the reserve general fund towards the Kingsway Green and Guide Hut projects.

168.4 Mr. Clapp reported that the Council had been asked to underwrite the deficit on the Farnhams Magazine budget by £1,500 for 2016/17 in the same way it had in 2015/16. He advised that the overall principle was to support the Farnhams Magazine and to work with them to provide a quality product free to every parishioner. The questionnaire responses showed it was very well read and doing a fantastic job. It was noted however that the magazine was expected to be self funding and that the Council had not yet been provided with any financial information to determine the extent of the current deficit. **It was agreed** to grant a further £1,500 on this occasion provided that the Clerk was given a copy of a set of accounts for 2016/17.

### **16/169/PC Planning**

169.1 Planning comments submitted since the last meeting were **approved**. Mr. Clapp advised that the Phil Whitakker garage application was going to go to a public enquiry. The Clerk would advise members of the date in due course.

169.2 Planning decisions were noted

169.3 In relation to the application for land rear of Honey Cottage Farnham Common it was noted that parking and access were big problems. Mr. Clapp would draft an appropriate comment for submission to SBDC.

169.4 **It was agreed** to support comments relating to the application for Holly House Christmas Lane made by residents in Open Forum. It was noted that such a development would be a bad precedent for other areas. Mr. Clapp made the point that the best way to provide protection was to gain special status such as an area of special interest or a conservation area. He had made this point through an article in the Farnhams Magazine but had received no responses. Given that over ten people appeared to have submitted objections the matter should go to planning committee and residents were best advised to 'do some leg work' to present a coherent case. He suggested they speak to local architects and local district councillors on planning committee.

169.5 In relation to the proposed neighbourhood plan, Mr. Clapp advised that this had seemed a good idea when it appeared that a large section of the Green Belt was under threat during the development of the Local Plan. That threat now seemed to have disappeared for the foreseeable future and it was his recommendation – in the light of the time, effort and expense involved – to not proceed with developing a neighbourhood plan. Cllr. Dhillon advised that if a unitary authority came into being then the local plan might be revisited. **It was agreed** to sideline the decision and revisit the situation in the future.

169.6 Mr. Rowley enquired what was known of the Farnham Lodge development. Mr. Clapp said that the boundary issue was still not resolved with the owners wishing to remove more trees. This was a matter for SBDC to resolve but the Clerk should chase SBDC to receive the monies paid over for reinstatement of the hedging.

### **16/170/PC Any Other Business**

170.1 Mr. Robinson noted that the Parish Council had previously agreed with the LAF for match funding towards the yellow lines issue in the Broadway at the then total cost of £15,000. He was instructed to say that the Council expected BCC to stick to the original approach and undertake the work at the original cost (only remove the yellow lines). It was not felt the survey had been undertaken properly and it was not clear why they needed more safety distance or extra signage. The dropped kerb remained through their own original error and needs to be raised

170.2 Mrs. Thompson reported that the Kingsway Green working party had met and hoped to develop a brief to bring to the next meeting with a view to looking for consultants to put forward conceptual proposals.

170.3 Mr. Home said he would be attending a Farnhams Magazine meeting on Thursday to ask if the magazine could be put on the new website.

170.4 Mr. Bilgorri said the Carols on the Green event had been a great success.

170.5 Mr. Rowley said he hoped to report back on the Guide Hut project at the next meeting

170.6 Mr. Thomas reported that the website was finished. A soft launch was planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> February with a proper launch at the Parish Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March. Some emails could be lost on the switch over on 2<sup>nd</sup> February so members were advised to back up emails.

### **16/171/PC Next meeting**

The meeting closed at 9.40pm. The next meeting would be on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 7.30pm at Farnham Royal Village Hall

### **NOTES from the public open forum of the meeting**

Mr. Steve Wilson of Christmas Lane expressed objections to the outline planning application pending for Holly House on Christmas Lane. He said there was currently a single house on a large plot which the owners wished to knock down and replace with two dwellings. This would completely change the aspect of the lane which comprised individually designed houses in decent sized plots. Residents there wished to retain the rural aspect of the Lane which was a beautiful local amenity.

Mr. Johnny Ball commented that the Christmas lights had looked wonderful and the village appeared well managed. He thanked the Council for the extra grass cutting. He recommended that the Council consider installing a welcome to Farnham Common sign. Mr. Clapp said he would support the sign idea as it would help distinguish the village from the area to the north which was not so well maintained.

Mr. Ball asked what was being done about Footpath 4 between Barn Close and Egypt Lane which was very thick with mud/debris over its tarmac surface. Mr. Home explained that we had been in touch with BCC who were responsible for maintaining the footpath. They had said it was at the bottom of their list and in Mr. Home's opinion it was unlikely

to ever be done. One solution would be to get a work party of volunteers together to do the work.

Mrs. Tipping noted that the sign from the library to the A355 said 'Beware of pedestrians' and should read 'Be aware of pedestrians'

*This concludes the meeting.*