

FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 22 OCTOBER AT 7.30 P.M. IN FARNHAM COMMON VILLAGE HALL

Present

Mr. Paul Rowley (Chairman) Mr. Bob Milne
Mrs. Judy Tipping Mr. Richard Thomas
Mrs. Marilyn Rolfe Mrs. Jennifer Jebson
Mrs. Judith Hall – Clerk
Sixteen members of the public

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.

18/124/PC Apologies for absence

Mr. John Hodges, Mr. Roger Home and Mr. Clive Robinson

18/125/PC To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2018

The minutes were **approved** and signed by the Chairman.

18/126/PC Matters Arising (not covered on the agenda and for information only)

126.1 Mrs. Rolfe advised that the Kingsway Green working group had met a couple of weeks ago and following that one of the members was drawing some plans. She further advised that a resident had donated a bench to go around the oak tree and it was likely that seating, hedging locations and surface materials would be discussed at the next meeting. Clarification was given that the site would not include a children's play area due to the surrounding roads and that the area was seen as more of a location for people to sit and chat. Mrs. Prior (a member of the public who is also a member of the working group) asked how big Mrs. Rolfe felt the event area that had been discussed should be and Mrs. Rolfe advised that it should not be large. At this point, Mr. Houdret (a member of the public) reminded the Chairman that only councillors should speak outside of the open forum. The Chairman acknowledged this and requested that the group began to calculate the likely cost of the project to assist with 2019/20 budget setting.

126.2 The Clerk advised that she had received confirmation that the bank mandate had now been updated.

126.3 The Chairman advised that the first meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is scheduled to take place on 12 November 2018. He also advised that six people had shown interest with possibly one other but there was space for a maximum of 10. The Chairman clarified that it was the role of the Parish Council to see that the group operates in a way that works towards the required referendum. He cautioned that this is not a quick process and would take a number of months with lots of public meetings to ensure that parishioners understand the plan. He stressed that the referendum response thresholds are high.

126.4 The Clerk advised that she would be meeting with Mrs. Jebson shortly to progress the development of the Parish Council's Facebook page.

126.5 Mr. Milne advised that the Clerk would be contacting BCC regarding permission to relocate the lamp post in Kemsley Chase and he would be meeting with the resident to agree the exact proposed location and which neighbours to consult.

126.6 The Clerk advised that TfB requested that Thames Water finished the permanent road surface reinstatement outside the McCarthy & Stone development and that this took place at the beginning of October 2018 and that she was waiting to hear whether they had made a return visit to make sure that the work is to the correct specification.

She also confirmed that if there were still concerns after the works were completed TfB said that they would get further investigatory works carried out.

126.7 The Chairman advised that he and the Clerk had met with Andy Barnard and Helen Read at Burnham Beeches and that it was fascinating to hear their 500 year plan. The Chairman advised that they had discussed the apparent change in behavior of travellers from occupying private land to occupying public land and that Mr. Barnard had advised that he would be installing height restriction barriers at the main car park. The Chairman advised that the Parish Council would explore what needs to be done with the carpark on The Broadway as a height restriction barrier can still let delivery lorries into the car park. He stated that whilst this is not something the Parish Council can make happen it would push ahead with SBDC. Mr. Milne asked whether a similar barrier would work at FCSC but Mr. Thomas did not feel this would be appropriate. The Chairman also advised that they had discussed the Neighbourhood Plan and Helen Read had advised that due to the site's designation as a Special Area of Conservation it had high levels of protection some of which were quite far reaching so it had been suggested that they attend an early Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting to explain this further.

126.8 The Chairman advised that he and Mr. Milne had met the Rainbows and Brownies leaders to discuss the Guide Hut and their plans for the future as the Parish Council still wishes to support the group and there is approx. seven years left on the lease. The Chairman also advised that the leaders are happy with the facilities as it is all they have but the building is well past its sell by date. The Chairman further advised that the leaders had suggested that they approach The Guide Association for grant funding and that he would like the Guide Hut and neighbouring playground to be discussed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan and that any suggestion would need to include the FCSC.

126.9 The Chairman advised that following an issue at the public meeting to discuss the green belt, one councillor had been referred to the Monitoring Officer at SBDC and that the Clerk had finally managed to speak with the person dealing with the referral at SBDC today. The Clerk advised that she had been told that a decision notice would be issued this week.

126.10 Mr. Thomas advised that a meeting had been arranged for himself, the Chairman and the Clerk with an enforcement company for 23 November 2018 and that they would report back to the Parish Council following the meeting. Mr. Milne asked whether the enforcement company would deal with tented camps and not just travellers and Mr. Thomas advised that he didn't know but would ask. Mr. Thomas also advised that there had been a camp in Ingram's Copse behind Grange Gardens over the weekend where people had been chopping down trees with axes, attaching signs to trees and behaving strangely. He confirmed that they had left earlier today. Mr. Milne mentioned a camp that had been found in Boundary Copse and that he felt these posed health and safety and child protection issues.

126.11 The Clerk confirmed that she had requested membership of the Bucks and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils as instructed at the last meeting and that she have negotiated a 50% reduction in the subscription as the Parish Council was joining halfway through the year. She advised that as soon as the membership had been confirmed she would issue details to all councillors.

126.12 The Clerk advised that she had been contacted by a resident who was enquiring whether the Parish Council would support some form a litter picking initiative which had been agreed at the last Parish Council Meeting so she had spoken to a volunteer litter picker who would welcome a coordinated effort. The Clerk will discuss the idea with other local Parish Councils, particularly Burnham Parish Council to see what and how they organise for this. Mrs. Rolfe advised that at the last event organized by Burnham Parish saw 60 volunteers collect 90 bags of rubbish. Mr. Milne also advised that the open spaces working group will be reviewing the litter picking provision at the next meeting. The Chairman advised that the Clerk had been asked to revise the specifications of all service contracts in light of councillor and resident comments so this process needed to include our litter pickers but it was noted that the litter pickers should not feel threatened by this. The Chairman confirmed that the council was looking to implement performance management for all contracts. At this point, Mrs. Tipping advised that she had saved the Farnham Common 'Best Kept Village' shield from 2000 that the library was about to throw out. She requested that the Clerk contact the library so the Parish Council could have an opportunity to claim anything for the archives.

126.13 Mr. Milnes advised that the Clerk had asked three contractors to quote by 1 November 2018 for the work outlined in the September 2018 Survey of Verges Report and that the quotes would be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

126.14 The Chairman invited Mr. Thomas, as a result of his comments at a previous Parish Council meeting

regarding the Parish Council's role in planning, to suggest a new approach that could be adopted. Mr. Thomas advised that he felt that parishioners thought the Parish Council had a say and power in local planning decisions but that in reality that was not the case. He suggested that the Parish Council facilitates residents obtaining proper advice by putting a budget aside and by forming a partnership with a planning consultant. The Chairman suggested the formation of a planning committee which would look at the nature of an application and decide whether a referral to a consultant was required to properly challenge the application. Other applications would be dealt with by the committee. The committee would have terms of reference and a budget to satisfy the professional charges of the consultant. The Chairman continued that the Parish Council has the resources to facilitate this process and that it was in the best interests of the Parish to perform this function. The Chairman, Mr. Milne, Mrs. Rolfe and Mrs. Tipping volunteered to join the new committee. Mr. Thomas expressed his feeling that the members needed to have knowledge of planning and must not be merely enthusiastic amateurs with an interest in planning. Mr. Milne agreed and stated that there would be an expectation that members would attend relevant training. Mrs. Tipping expressed annoyance that planning appeals for the Parish are dealt with in Bristol as they, on the face of it, know nothing about the parish and she did not believe that they even visited the relevant sites. Mrs. Hodgson (a member of the public) advised that in her experience a site visit was conducted. The Chairman advised that whilst this was not something the Parish Council could change he had taken on board the comment and this could be discussed with a planning consultant. Mrs. Tipping asked whether the Clerk was informed when a site visit was due to take place and the Clerk confirmed that she was not. Mrs. Rolfe urged for caution when objecting to an appeal in Bristol as costs could be awarded against the Parish Council and the matter could be referred to London.

18/127/PC To consider the next steps for filling councillor vacancies

The Clerk advised that following the co-option of Mrs. Jebson at the last Parish Council meeting there were now two vacancies and that currently the Parish Council should be using its best endeavours to fill the vacancies. She further advised that the Chairman had spoken to an individual who had been referred to the Clerk by Cllr. Anthony but that they had decided not to join the Parish Council. Mrs. Tipping stated that it would be particularly good if any new councillor(s) resided in Farnham Royal.

18/128/PC To consider the result of the car park referendum

The Chairman explained that the Parish Council had agreed that a voting threshold should be applied to the referendum as a positive outcome would affect every household's council tax bill and reminded those present that a threshold of 20% had been agreed at September's Parish Council meeting. The Chairman advised that Mr. Houdret had stated that there were 3,830 houses in the Parish but the Parish Council did not take this at face value and asked SBDC to confirm the figure, which it did at 2,535. The Chairman further advised that unfortunately the valid votes received had not met the threshold and as such the Parish Council would not be proceeding with a discussion with SBDC about reinstating the first half hour free parking. The Clerk then confirmed that 410 'Yes' votes had been received and 78 'No' votes had been received resulting in total valid votes of 488 against a threshold of 507. The Clerk further advised that eight spoilt voting cards were also received. These had either been amended to change the question before voting or both boxes had been completed. In addition, four voting cards were received late and were therefore marked as invalid. The Chairman advised that the result was very disappointing as the Parish Council would have liked to have supported residents and shops by pursuing this issue and that the Parish Council would like to take some time to review the matter with a view to identifying other potential options. Mr. Thomas advised that the issue for many parishioners was that the method used to conduct the referendum failed as the use of the Farnhams Magazine was not successful. He felt it was necessary for the Parish Council to consider the use of polling stations should a similar exercise be conducted in the future. A member of the public advised that he had spoken to residents in Farnham Park Lane, One Pin Lane and Purton Lane who had received the magazine and the voting card but had not realised. Mr. Thomas reiterated that the process just didn't work. Mrs. Rolfe offered the Farnham Common Village Hall as a polling station if needed in the future.

18/129/PC To agree representation at Remembrance Service(s) in November 2018

The Clerk advised that as 11 November 2018 falls on a Sunday this year the event on Kingsway Green will be very low key with the main focus being on the church service and war memorial in Farnham Royal. At 11 o'clock two members of the Royal British Legion will lower the flag on Kingsway Green and observe two minutes silence. They

will not stop the traffic and there will not be the usual refreshments afterwards. A councillor is welcome to join them to lay the wreath. The Chairman volunteered to lay the wreath at the war memorial in Farnham Royal and Mrs. Tipping volunteered to lay the wreath in Farnham Common and **this was agreed**. Mr. Milnes expressed that the WW1 commemorative flags were underwhelming in Farnham Common and that more would have been more effective. Mrs. Tipping requested that a new union flag was purchased for Farnham Common and **this was agreed**.

18/130/PC To discuss the village Christmas event

Mrs. Rolfe advised that Farnham Common Village Hall would like to hold "Carols Not on the Green", which would be a free afternoon including Christmas crafts, Santa's grotto, hopefully a radio link to the North Pole, songs and carols from Farnham & Hedgerley Harmonies and the village schools, a lollipop kitchen and the launch of the new cinema showing "The Snowman". The Chairman asked whether it was the intention to make this an annual event and Mrs. Rolfe confirmed that it was. Mrs. Rolfe asked for £500 to assist with running the event, which **was agreed**. Mrs. Rolfe and Mrs. Tipping abstained from the vote due to their connection with the event and the village hall.

18/131/PC Finance

131.1 The Chairman advised that the Finance Committee had met earlier that evening and that Mr. Milne had been appointed as the new chairman of the committee. Mr. Milne advised that the external audit had been concluded and that reference had been made in their opinion to three issues identified during the internal audit. Mr. Milne asked that the relevant page of the Annual governance and Accountability Return 2017/18 together with the minutes of the last Finance Committee meeting be circulated to all councillors. Mr. Milnes confirmed that the Finance Committee would meet again on 26 November 2018 to review the issues and ensure measures had been put in place to prevent these issues arising in the future. In addition, Mr. Milne advised that the Clerk would be attempting to recalculate the year end position to take into account various additional expenditure such as the increased Clerk costs and extra LAF project costs, as part of the budgeting process for 2019/2020.

131.2 It was noted that Mr. Hodges and Mr. Milne had both reviewed the cashbook for October 2018. The payments and receipts, as per the cashbook, **were approved**.

131.3 It was noted that all councillors had received the quarterly management information to 30 September 2018.

131.4 The Clerk advised that she had received a quote of £400 plus VAT from Capability Landscapes Limited to clear the dead wood on the west side of Green Man Hill adjacent to the layby. **This was agreed**.

131.5 The Clerk advised that the cost of repairing the paving at the War Memorial in Farnham Royal was £240 and that the work had been carried out. **This expenditure was ratified** and it was noted that the contractor had done a good job.

131.6 Mr. Thomas advised that the RFU had declined to provide a financial contribution towards to the cost of the proposed external wall mounted defibrillator at FCSC as they had contributed towards the cost of the unit inside the clubhouse. He confirmed that the other sections of the club had been approached but no response had been received and that direct approaches to members had generated £140.58. Mr. Milne expressed his frustration as when the Parish Council was discussing the proposed locations for the village defibrillators, FCSC was discounted as it already had one. The discussion continued during which the placement of defibrillators at Farnham Royal Playing Fields, the Farnham Royal Cricket Club and both village halls was raised and discounted. Those present were also reminded that whilst the Parish Council organised the defibrillators located in the villages, the Rotary club actually paid for them. Mrs. Rolfe asked whether the unit already at FCSC could be put in an external wall mounted box and Mr. Thomas advised that it probably could but there is a fitness room and squash court inside. Mr. Milne proposed that the Clerk take on responsibility for organising this. **This was agreed**.

131.7 Mr. Thomas advised that dog waste was a continual issue with 42 instances of waste being found on pitches since the rugby season started on 2 September 2018 and as a result the FCSC committee felt that extra steps should be taken to persuade people to pick up after their dogs. Mr. Thomas had therefore located a supplier of dog waste bag dispensers at a cost of £79 plus VAT each and a further £26 plus VAT for 800 bags. Mr. Thomas further advised that Burnham Beeches adopted the same approach and then consulted on allowing dogs only on leads and then a dog ban to protect children. Mr. Milne confirmed that dog waste had been a big issue for years and years and Mr. Thomas advised that this was why the FCSC committee would like to try something different. Mr. Milne expressed his dissatisfaction that the dog waste bins were frequently overflowing and asked the clerk to find out how often they were emptied. Mr. Milne also asked Mr. Thomas for his proposal regarding the monitoring of and

replacement of bags. Mr. Thomas advised that FCSC does not have any full-time staff and he would need to ask for a volunteer. Mrs. Rolfe stated that this would be in the interests of players and Mrs. Tipping asked whether if this didn't improve the situation dogs would be required to remain on leads. Mr. Thomas said that it would be necessary to see how this went before entering into a consultation regarding dogs on leads. Mr. Milne proposed that the Clerk take on responsibility for organising this. **This was agreed.**

131.8 The Clerk advised that further expenditure of £50 plus VAT was incurred in printing 360 more voting cards for the car park referendum. **This expenditure was ratified.**

18/132/PC Planning

132.1 The Planning Comments were **approved** and the Planning decisions were noted.

18/133/PC Any Other Business (for information only)

133.1 Mrs. Tipping wished to make other councillors aware that there is now an issue with vehicles parking in Hawthorn Lane due to Burnham Beeches parking charges.

133.2 Mrs. Rolfe wished to make other councillors aware of an issue raised at the recent LAF meeting regarding the school bus to Beaconsfield and to advise that Cllr. Hazell had agreed to look into the issue.

133.3 Mrs. Rolfe also wished to make other councillors aware that due to changes to the bus service, if parishioners wish to travel to Beaconsfield they must now travel to Loudwater and then catch another bus back to Beaconsfield. Mrs. Rolfe has agreed to discuss this with Arriva, the operator, and advised that Cllr. Dhillon is aware of both issues.

18/134/PC To agree under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under item 18 below that the public be temporarily excluded and be instructed to withdraw

This was **agreed**.

18/135/PC Update regarding a historic contingent liability

The professional advice obtained was discussed and it was agreed that a repayment plan would be put forward to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

18/136/PC Next meeting

The meeting closed at 10.25pm. The next meeting will be on Monday 26 November 2018 at 7.30pm at Farnham Royal Village Hall.

OPEN FORUM

Mr. Hodgson wished to make the Parish Council aware of a retrospective planning application currently being considered by BCC concerning the processing of construction waste using a crusher at Bishops House, Crown Lane by M&S Groundworks. The processing is causing significant noise and dust pollution and is degrading the verges due to the trucks using Crown Lane. It was noted that people think the activity is being carried out by Summerleaze Limited but clarification was given by Mrs. Prior that it is not. Concern was raised that there are a lot of houses nearby and that Farnham Lane would be hugely affected by increased vehicle movements. Mr. Milne advised that the site was in Burnham Parish rather than Farnham Royal Parish but asked whether there was a BCC application number and Mr. Hodgson confirmed it as CM/0085/18. Mrs. Prior advised that she had written to Cllr. Hazell but had not yet received a reply. Mrs. Rolfe advised that she was meeting Cllr. Hazell the next day and would speak to her about the application. The Chairman advised residents to write to BCC and advised that councillors would also write as individuals. Mr. Hodgson urged people to respond quickly as there were only four days remaining. Mr. Turner asked whether Farnham Lane was in Burnham Parish or Farnham Royal Parish. Mr. Milne advised that the site was in Burnham and that Crown Lane was the parish boundary. Mrs. Prior advised that if the trucks turn left when they exit the site, as is required when exiting the Summerleaze site, they will be on Farnham Royal roads so there will be an effect on Farnham Royal residents. Mr. Houdret suggested forming a Residents Action Group ("RAG") to write to BCC, SBDC and each councillor so Cllr. Hazell and Cllr. Dhillon.

Mr. Howden wished to discuss the proposal previously considered by the Parish Council to change Beeches Road to a one-way system. Mr. Howden advised that he had surveyed all residents (including those 'for' the scheme) for what they knew and thought about the proposal. He advised that what came out of the survey was that something needs to be done so it would be sensible to organise a meeting and come up with ideas. Mrs. Rolfe asked whether Mr. Howden included Green Lane and he confirmed he had not. Mrs. Rolfe felt that Green Lane must be included as it would be severely impacted by any change in Beeches Road. The Chairman asked Mr. Howden whether he would be against widening the consultation to include Green Lane and Kingsway. Mr. Howden explained that he did not include those residents as if Beeches Road is not turned into a one-way road then there would be no effect on them. He felt that only if the Beeches Road residents agreed to a one-way system would you need to get others involved. His feeling is that you need to get Beeches Road sorted first and the previous Parish Council meeting minutes seen by Mr. Howden did not refer to either Green Lane or Kingsway. Mrs. Rolfe advised that BCC would not get involved until there was a proposition from residents.