

# FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.30 P.M. IN FARNHAM ROYAL VILLAGE HALL**

### **Present**

Mr. Paul Rowley (Chairman)    Mrs. Marilyn Rolfe  
Mrs. Judy Tipping                Mr. Bob Milne  
Mr. Clive Robinson               Mr. Richard Thomas  
Mrs. Judith Hall – Clerk  
Six members of the public and District Councillor Dev 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.

### **19/94/PC Apologies for absence**

Mr. John Hodges, Mr. Roger Home and Mrs. Jennifer Quilter (formerly Jebson)

### **19/95/PC Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **19/96/PC To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 28 October 2019**

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

### **19/97/PC Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda - for information only)**

The Chairman advised that prior to the meeting all councillors had been provided with a report detailing the items under this section. The report was provided to all those in attendance and can be downloaded from the Parish Council website or a hard copy can be requested from the clerk.

97.1 Update on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – report noted and the Chairman advised that he attended the last meeting which discussed the feedback from the community forums. He stated that the feedback was encouraging and similar from both groups but that the number of people who attended was less encouraging. The Clerk agreed to circulate the report prepared by the group to all councillors.

97.2 Update on the BCC Community Boards consultation – report noted and Mr. Milne advised that he attended a special meeting of SBALC to discuss Martin Tett's letter to the association as it was considered negative and dismissive. Mr. Milne stated that there would be community access points in addition to the boards where officers from BCC would drop in. He continued that the role of parish councils and how the boards would actually operate were still being decided. He explained that SBALC had agreed to write back to Martin Tett without criticising or challenging his comments rather confirming that it wants to work with the new authority. The Chairman stated that the communication received today spoke about devolving services and assets to parish councils and asked whether the Parish Council wanted to consider this in the future. He also reiterated that more involvement was needed to be more effective. Finally, Mr. Milnes advised that Town Councils may want to be community access points as they have full time staff whereas smaller parish councils may not.

### **19/98/PC Open Spaces:**

The Chairman advised that prior to the meeting all councillors had been circulated with a report providing an update on this item. The report was provided to all those in attendance and can be downloaded from the Parish Council

website or a hard copy can be requested from the Clerk.

98.1 To consider awarding maintenance contract to Amersham Town Council – report noted and **it was agreed** to award the maintenance contract to Amersham Town Council.

98.2 To consider options and a vehicle for seeking residents views for phase one of the Kingsway Green Project – report noted and the Chairman advised that due to financial pressures the project would need to be phased and that the immediate action was to install something along the border with Kingsway in order to protect the Green from vehicles parking on it. He continued that a proposition had been communicated to councillors by a group of residents and that he wanted the clear view of each councillor in order to see whether there was any consensus of the options. Each councillor then reviewed the options presented and gave a first and second preference. Mr. Robinson felt that whatever was installed needed to prevent and deter parking so opted for doric bollards or concrete bollards. Mr. Thomas opted for doric bollards with planters or doric bollards on their own. Mrs. Tipping chose wooden posts without chains as she felt they would get broken or stolen. Mrs. Rolfe felt that wooden posts or concrete bollards would work well. The Chairman advised that he liked the idea of planters but that these would cost the most to purchase and maintain so he felt that concrete bollards would be most sensible and raised his concerns regarding chains being trip hazards. Mr. Milne advised that he would like planters but agreed that these could be placed elsewhere on the Green. He also advised that a vote was held approximately three years ago which agreed wooden posts and chains but the then clerk advised that the chains posed a safety risk for pedestrians. In order to progress matters, Mr. Thomas advised that 8" square wooden posts standing 2' 6" above ground would do the job just as well as a doric bollard. Mrs. Rolfe agreed and added that they would have more of a country look and feel. Mrs. Tipping added that the tops should be sloped so water won't sit on the tops. Mr. Robinson therefore proposed that nine 8" square posts are installed and **this was agreed**.

98.3 To consider the wild flower verge proposal – report noted and Mr. Milne reminded those present that the Parish Council had received a proposal for a wild flower verge at one of two suggested sites; A355 south of Elm Close or A355 opposite the junction with One Pin Lane. He continued that the new maintenance contract provided for Amersham Town Council to cut both verges. He also advised that there was probably going to be an annual cost of £1,000 for preparing a re-seeding the area and that although non-native plants had been suggested to extend the flowering season, it was still likely to look awful for three-four months of the year. He also stated his preference for using a site in conjunction with BCC north of the 50mph sign at the entrance to Farnham Common from Beaconsfield. Mrs. Tipping asked whether BCC owned both verges and Mr. Milne stated that he believed so. Mrs. Tipping then asked Mr. Foulds whether the site to the south of Elm Close was actually his. Mr Foulds confirmed it was not as the fence was the boundary. The Chairman asked Mr. Milne whether he was against the idea of a flower verge or whether he would rather the flower verge was outside of the devolved area. Mr. Milne said he would support a flower verge although he was not keen on the use of non-native plants but felt that the area north of the 50mph sign was better as it was currently not maintained well by BCC and would therefore enhance the area. The Chairman stated his ambition to make Farnham Royal and Farnham Common equal and he felt placing the flower verge just south of Elm Close would do this and asked whether anybody was against this approach. Mr. Thomas admitted that his knowledge of wild flowers was non-existent and that he was largely ambivalent but felt that he might like it. Mr. Milne reiterated his feeling that a verge inside the 30mph area should not be used. Mrs. Rolfe thanked the residents for preparing an excellent document and noted that the grass needs to be killed. The Chairman asked when the weed killing and seeding should take place and he was advised that the weed killing would be done in January/February with the seeding being done in February/March. Jon Quixley, one of the residents who prepared the document, advised that the remit given to them was that the verge needed to be within the 30mph area and it was necessary to nail down the site. Mr. Milne advised that he objected to the scheme due to cost and as he didn't think wild flower verges were appropriate within the 30mph area as some residents complain when the verges are not cut regularly may therefore not like wild flowers. The Chairman advised that he would like to see the verge between the two villages being used. Mr. Thomas clarified that the area of the flower verge would be 250msq. Jon Quixley confirmed and advised that long, narrow areas work best. **It was agreed**, in principle, to do a trial but the location was to be considered further.

98.4 To consider repairs to two benches – report noted and **it was agreed** to instruct Progress Services to carry out the work.

98.5 To consider advice received on the Council's rights of way concerning Boundary Copse and Ingrams Copse – report noted and Mr. Milne advised that the legal advice received confirmed that the Parish Council's right of access

to Ingrams Copse is being obstructed by the fence erected by L&Q at Warren Court. The solicitors have suggested that they write to L&Q setting out the position and demanding that L&Q remove the fence and requesting confirmation that it will not further impede the right of way. The cost estimate provided by the solicitors was between £500 to £1,500 plus VAT and disbursements. Mr. Thomas asked who wanted access to Ingrams Copse and Mr. Milne advised that the Parish Council does for maintenance and emergency vehicles. He then asked if the Parish Council had met with L&Q to talk about the issue. Mr. Milne confirmed that a meeting had taken place where L&Q agreed to take it up but despite chasing nothing had ever been done. **It was agreed** to instruct BP Collins to draft and send the suggested letter. In addition, it was noted that the solicitors had advised that gates could be erected at Boundary Copse without notifying L&Q of the impending works. **It was agreed** that given the financial position of the Parish Council, this would be held in abeyance.

98.6 To consider proposal to apply for the Community Payback group to clean footpath 4 (Barn Close to Egypt Lane) – report noted and Mr. Robinson advised that a couple of years ago the Parish Council and the LAF jointly funded re-tarmacing the footpath and it was now in a bad state. He had therefore spoken to the PCSO who had referred him to Tabish, the Deputy Clerk at Burnham Parish Council, to discuss the possibility of using the Community Payback group to tidy up the path. Together Mr. Robinson and Tabish had drafted the proposal presented to councillors. **This was agreed.**

98.7 To consider fee proposal for this year's arboriculturalist reports – report noted and **it was agreed** to instruct Pyramid Consulting to carry out the work.

#### **19/99/PC Finance:**

99.1 To approve payments and note receipts, as per the cashbook  
The payments and receipts, as per the cashbook, **were approved.**

#### **19/100/PC Planning:**

100.1 To consider comments submitted on recent applications  
The Planning Comments **were ratified.**

100.2 To note recent planning decisions

The Planning decisions **were noted** and in particular that more are now being withdrawn due to pressure from parishioners and interested parties.

100.3 Mrs. Rolfe advised that M & S Groundworks had requested an extension and that all councillors should write with objections. The Clerk agreed to circulate a copy of the letter received to all councillors.

#### **19/101/PC Any Other Business (for information only)**

101.1 Mr. Thomas asked the Clerk to issue letters to the neighbours of FCSC regarding access rights. The Clerk confirmed that she would do this.

101.2 Mrs. Tipping Asked if the Clerk would chase BCC as the three drains on Victoria Road need cleaning and there is flooding by the Victoria pub.

#### **19/102/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 9 below that the public be temporarily excluded and be instructed to withdraw**

This was **agreed.**

#### **19/103/PC To consider the first draft of the 2020/21 budget and projections for 2021/22 and 2022/23**

Councillors reviewed the first draft and discussed available options.

#### **19/104/PC Next meeting**

The meeting closed at 9.35pm. The next meeting will be on 27 January 2020 at 7.30pm at Farnham Common Village Hall.

## OPEN FORUM

Mr. Waye, a resident, wished to advise that a footpath off Elm close needed cleaning as there were puddles of mud. Mr. Robinson advised that if the Parish Council agreed he would have a look and include this footpath with this application to the Community Payback Scheme.

Mr. Foulds, a resident, advised that he was bemused and staggered at the amount of eight-wheeled tipper vehicles going up and down the A355. He continued that the lorries were putting diabolical pressure on the cars in front of them. Mrs. Tipping stated that the lorries are supposed to go to the M4 rather than through the village. Mrs. Rolfe advised that M & S Groundworks had appealed for an extra 20 weeks to clear the site at Bishops House. Mr. Foulds felt that this issue should be raised officially and asked whether SBDC have any teeth. He advised that there are currently very few motorbikes but that when they are heard it is a pain. Cllr. Dhillon confirmed that the application has been made to BCC rather than SBDC and that he would be speaking against it and seeking enforcement action straight away. He also advised that it was an issue for the Environment Agency. Mrs. Rolfe advised that the Environment Agency had apologised to the occupiers of Deep Wood but no action has yet been taken.

Mr. Norvill, a resident, spoke regarding 6 Fairfield Lane, Farnham Royal and advised that despite the Planning Officers recommendation the Chairman of the SBDC Planning Committee considered that the property offered squalid conditions and the application was refused. In addition, the committee chairman offered to represent the community in any future appeal. Mr. Norvill noted that Cllr. Dhillon spoke eloquently at the committee meeting. The Chairman thanked Mr. Norvill for his efforts in respect of the application. Mr. Norvill wished to advise that he was trying to get SBDC Planning Enforcement to consider 1 Fairfield Lane, Farnham Royal as extensive work had been undertaken at the property with no planning consent.

Mr. Norvill also wished to ensure that the Parish Council was aware that the second application at the Miles & Miles Nursery site had been withdrawn on the advice of the SBDC Planning Officer due to flooding and it being located on the green belt. In addition, there was a petition opposing the application containing c. 100 names. Mr. Norvill expressed interest in approaching the owner for community allotments and appealed for help in finding a benefactor or co-operative to help with the project in order to safeguard the land in perpetuity. The Chairman advised that he felt this would be supported by all councillors and Mr. Robinson suggest that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group consider the proposal. Mr. Milne advised that the Parish Council has some ring fenced reserves for a residents' action group and although he would need to look at the policy, these could possibly be used.

Cllr. Dhillon advised reiterated the comments made by Mr. Norvill regarding 6 Fairfield Lane, Farnham Royal and confirmed that he was working with SBDC Planning Enforcement regarding 1 Fairfield Lane, Farnham Royal.

Cllr. Dhillon also reviewed the position with the Community Boards and advised that there were likely to be 16 boards each with c. £100,000 per board per year. He confirmed that the details were still being worked out but that Parish Councils would have voting rights and that there would be an annual meeting for each board. The Chairman stated that he supported the principle but advised that the Parish Council has to have a voice and vote as he doesn't want to just listen, he wants to take things forward.

Mr. Robinson advised that there was a meeting regarding the impact of the new unitary authority on planning. He stated that he would like to go and it was agreed that he should.