

# FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 30 MARCH 2020 AT 7.30 P.M. BY CONFERENCE CALL

### Present

Mr. Paul Rowley (Chairman)	Mrs. Marilyn Rolfe
Mr. Bob Milne	Mr. Richard Thomas
Mr. Roger Home	Mrs. Jennifer Quilter
Mrs. Judith Hall – Clerk	

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30pm.

### 20/20/PC Apologies for absence

Mr. John Hodges, Mrs. Judy Tipping and Mr. Clive Robinson

### 20/21/PC Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 20/22/PC To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 27 January 2020 and 24 February 2020

The minutes were **approved** and **it was agreed** that they would be signed by the Chairman the next day.

### 20/23/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 can be downloaded from the Parish Council website.

23.1 Update on flower verge pilot – the Chairman read the content of the report as follows: It has been agreed with Amersham Town Council (“ATC”) that two different seed mixes will be spread on the site together with yellow rattle seeds. The Clerk will therefore be asking if the Horticultural Society is still happy to purchase their choice being Pictorial Meadow, which will be sown with a mix sourced by ATC called Banquet. The Clerk is responsible for purchasing the yellow rattle seed. ATC have attended the site and sprayed off the area but the timing of further work is likely to be affected by the current situation.

23.2 Update from The Farnhams Support Group – Covid19 – The Chairman invited Mr. Thomas to provide a report on this brilliant initiative. Mr. Thomas advised that the initiative had now spread to every town and the model used by the Group started in Gerrards Cross. He advised that the gentleman from Gerrards Cross helped the Group with creating the resource which initially listed all of the roads in Farnham Common and Farnham Royal but was then extended to cover Hedgerley when the Scouts became involved. He continued that the area has 122 roads and there are now volunteers covering 121 of them. Each of the covered roads has at least one volunteer but some have as many as three which provides a good level of coverage. He also confirmed that Warren Court is covered. Mr. Thomas explained that he was keen for the Parish Council do something to help residents during this emergency and that, following discussion with the Chairman, he added the Parish Council branding to all documents etc. He advised that there are three individuals in addition to him that are running the Group; Adrian Dickinson, Diane Blackmore and David Banks and nearly 70 volunteers and thanked them all for their efforts. He advised that up to now residents had not needed much help but that this requirement was likely to increase as time went on and also that group members may need to isolate or may become ill so more volunteers may be needed. He advised that all volunteers have been asked to sign up for the NHS volunteer scheme but that the checks carried out by the scheme were taking a long time to come back.

23.3 Update on Coronavirus Bill – the Chairman advised that the Coronavirus Act, having received royal assent on Wednesday 25 March 2020, contained provisions for local authority meetings to be held remotely and that the National Association of Local Councils is awaiting further government guidance on the mechanics of the process. He shared his view that during the current emergency it is important that councillors still communicate with each other and that decisions are still made. This view was shared by all those present.

#### **20/24/PC Open Spaces:**

The Chairman advised that prior to the meeting all councillors had been provided with a report detailing this item. The report can be downloaded from the Parish Council website.

24.1 To ratify decision to remove the roses from the flower beds at Kingsway Green and plant seasonal flowers for the Summer – The Chairman read from the report as follows: It was recently agreed by email that Amersham Town Council should clear the flower beds on Kingsway Green (excluding the crocus bulbs planted by the Rotary Club) and top up the soil level to make them ready for planting. The only cost would be for the top soil and the Clerk is waiting for the quote which has been delayed due to the current situation. It was further agreed that the Parish Council would then ask the resident who previously offered to plant the beds to do this on the understanding that it was just for the summer season whilst a more permanent plan was developed. If the resident is unable to help ATC can plant them and they source their plants from Farnham Common Nurseries just like the resident. The Parish Council would need to meet the cost of the plants. This decision **was ratified**.

#### **20/25/PC Finance:**

The Chairman advised that prior to the meeting all councillors had been provided with a report detailing the items under this section. The report can be downloaded from the Parish Council website.

25.1 To ratify payment of £125 to cover the printing costs of The Farnhams' Support Group – Covid19 –

The Chairman advised that it was recently agreed by email that the Groups printing costs of £100 would be paid by the Parish Council but that this figure had increased slightly to £125. This was payment was agreed. Mr. Thomas advised that there would not be any more printing costs but that some volunteers had found that people were unable to pay to the items purchased as they didn't have any cash having not been able to visit an ATM so some volunteers had been out of pocket. He advised that the Group did have a couple of donors but that a way forward needed to be decided. He advised that he had spoken to Cllr. Dhillon who was taking the issue up with the executive at BCC. He expressed that he wasn't asking for money but that some councillors might like to think about it. The Chairman advised that his view was that the Group should have a fund up to £500 to deal with these issues. Mr. Thomas felt that a proper system would need to be set up to allow proper due diligence to take place and that currently there was no proper plan for this. Mr. Milne felt that if volunteers kept the receipt something could be sorted out. Mr. Thomas advised that if there was tacit support then he would come up with a proposal. Mr. Home offered his support and all those present agreed. **It was agreed that Mr. Thomas will now prepare a proposal for either the next meeting or circulation by email in advance.**

25.2 To approve payments and note receipts, as per the cashbook

The payments and receipts, as per the cashbook, **were approved**. Mr. Milne in his capacity as Chair of the Finance Committee advised councillors that the final payment under the pension deficit agreement was due on 5 April 2020 and sought agreement to the payment of £7,500 being made. **This was agreed.**

25.3 To consider the quote received for preparing the 2019/20 annual accounts

A fixed fee of £525 plus VAT **was agreed** for preparing the 2019/20 annual accounts.

A fee of £80 plus VAT **was agreed** for dealing with queries raised by the external auditor on the 2018/19 accounts.

25.4 To consider the appointment of internal auditors and the quote received from them

The appointment of Wilkins Kennedy (formerly The Fish Partnership) was agreed. A capped fee of £1,125 plus VAT **was also agreed.**

25.5 To consider the quote received for repairs to the Christmas lights

The cost of is £1,487 plus VAT to repair the Christmas lights **was agreed.**

#### **20/26/PC Planning:**

The Chairman advised that prior to the meeting all councillors had been provided with schedules of the comments submitted and decisions made by SBDC Planning.

The Chairman invited Mrs. Rolfe to discuss any particular issues. She advised that the most controversial applications related to 1 Fairfield Lane and Allerds Farm. It was agreed that the Chairman, Mrs. Rolfe and the Clerk would have a conference call to agree the additional comments regarding the Allerds Farm application.

26.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

The Planning Comments **were ratified**.

26.2 To note recent planning decisions

The Planning decisions **were noted**.

#### **20/18/PC Any Other Business (for information only)**

18.1 Mr. Thomas advised that if residents make contact seeking confirmation of the support group member for their road, the easiest way to check is by going to the Parish Council website and following the link to the list of roads as the volunteers are all listed.

#### **20/19/PC Next meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.02pm. The next meeting will be on 27 April 2020 at 7.30pm. Due to the current situation it is not yet known whether this meeting will be a physical meeting or a conference call. Details will be published as soon as possible.