

FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 24 AUGUST 2020 AT 7.30 P.M. VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present

Mr. Paul Rowley (Chairman) Mrs. Marilyn Rolfe
Mr. Bob Milne Mr. Roger Home
Mrs. Judy Tipping Mr. Clive Robinson
Mr. Richard Thomas Mrs. Judith Hall – Clerk
Two members of the public, Phil Rudd (Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group), County Cllr. Dhillon and County Cllr. Anthony

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.

20/72/PC Apologies for absence

Mr. John Hodges and Mrs. Jennifer Quilter

20/73/PC Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

20/74/PC To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27 July 2020

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

20/75/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.

75.1 Update on Guide Hut – report noted and those present confirmed they had reviewed the notes of the meeting. The Chairman confirmed that another meeting was being arranged.

75.2 Update on S106 financial contribution projects – the report was noted. Mr. Home praised TfB for dealing with this so quickly and stated that TfB seemed to have accepted that there is a good safety case for maintaining the verges. He added that TfB also seemed to have agreed the need for a crossing in Farnham Royal by The Dukes Head.

75.3 Update on Community Payback projects – the report was noted. Mr. Home reiterated the contents of the report and thanked Cllr. Dhillon for his help in obtaining BC's agreement to the work north of Millwood Nursery to the 50 mph sign. Mr. Home advised that a budget of £2,000 (£100 per day plus temporary toilet facilities) should be provided and that the Community Payback Scheme hope to complete the projects by the end of October 2020. He added that the Scheme is keen to publicise the work and Johnny Ball is happy to get involved with this. Mr. Milne raised some overhanging shrubbery at one of the project sites and Mr. Home said the Scheme would deal with it if the Parish Council wanted/had responsibility for the area. Mr. Robinson clarified that the relevant vegetation was on the northside of the site which was public land and as such could and should be cut. The Chairman asked Mr. Home to add this to the project. Mr. Home confirmed that he would and advised that if he and/or Mr. Robinson could attend whilst the work was being carried out then they could ensure it is done to standard.

75.4 Update on the relocation of the defibrillator in Farnham Royal – the report noted and the Clerk reiterated the content.

75.5 Update on Covid19 community efforts – Mr. Thomas said the group had wound down as the need has

dissipated but that the volunteers will hopefully be there if it is needed in the future. The Chairman congratulated Mr. Thomas on receiving his 'Hero of The Farnhams' award from Joy Morrissey MP.

20/76/PC To consider a timetable for returning to face to face meetings and reopening the office

The Chairman recommended that the office remain closed due to the shared toilet facilities and advised that the Clerk does attend the office at least once a week to collect post and meet contractors when necessary. He also recommended continuing with virtual meetings. It was agreed that the office would remain closed and that all meetings would continue to be held via Zoom but that this would be reviewed each month at the parish council meeting.

20/77/PC Burnham Beeches SAC:

77.1 To receive an update on the recent Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultative Group meeting

Those present confirmed they had read the report circulated by Mrs. Quilter. Mrs. Rolfe said she was surprised to read the proposal to make Green Lane, Kingsway and Beeches Road residents' parking. The Chairman asked the Clerk to write to Burnham Beeches seeking consultation for residents due to the costs involved for them and it was felt that the Parish Council should write to Burnham Beeches asking where the evidence relied upon comes from to support the proposal. Mr. Milne raised that in the report it states that Burnham Beeches had already liaised with BC about this and raised concern that BC hadn't carried out consultation providing full details of the traffic calming measures proposed. Cllr. Dhillon said he would speak to BC to find out a bit more. The Chairman asked the Clerk to send Mrs. Quilter's report to both Cllr. Dhillon and Cllr. Anthony. Mr. Home asked whether this was a mature proposition that will go ahead and expressed that if that was the case it is appalling as BC are doing things to a community without consultation. It must be a carefully thought through plan for all users. The Chairman advised that this was a proposal not a plan for implementation and consultation must take place. Cllr. Dhillon advised that he had concerns as the Ward Councillors haven't been advised of the proposal. The Chairman said he would supply information to Cllr. Dhillon to take forward to BC.

77.2 To consider a response to the Burnham Beeches SAC consultation

The Chair advised the he, Mrs. Rolfe and Mr. Rudd (Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group) had now met a couple of times and wanted to discuss the points identified for the draft response. Mrs. Rolfe, as Chair of the Planning Working Group was asked to take councillors through the issues. Mrs. Rolfe advised the first issue was in respect of the retail and office units on The Broadway as these were within the proposed 500m zone and the concern is that the plan, if implemented, would prevent modifications/change of use on The Broadway potentially causing the high street to die. Mr. Milne asked whether the proposal is to do with additional housing or change of use. Mr. Rudd clarified that the wording early on in the consultation document states no new development however this conflicts with later statements where it says no net additional housing. He advised that English Nature has already picked up on this and asked for clarity. It was suggested that this was included in the Parish Council's response. It was felt that even if the plan related solely to no net new housing, there could still be an issue for The Broadway as if retail struggles some units may need to be changed into residential and it would be unfortunate if the Parish couldn't respond to changes in demand resulting in unusable land and buildings. Mr. Milne asked whether this meant there would be no new flats on The Broadway through conversion. The Chair said clarification was needed and asked if the Parish Council was in favour of no new houses. The Chairman said that the Parish Council wouldn't want empty buildings on the high street and should therefore suggest that flexibility is required for the high street. Mr. Robinson suggested amending the wording to prevent an increase in the footprint of the buildings no matter what the usage is. Mr. Rudd advised that he didn't feel that was what Burnham Beeches SAC were seeking rather they were looking for no new households in buildings. Mr. Rudd suggested the implementation of a test would be sensible. Mrs. Tipping and Mr. Rudd raised potential problems with the tyre centre if that business ever moved. The Chairman asked if all were agreed that the current plan didn't allow for future problems on The Broadway to be addressed. Mr. Thomas asked whether this proposal was being driven by Burnham Beeches SAC. This was confirmed. Mr. Rudd suggested that the Parish Council broadly agreed to this part of the proposal but wanted The Broadway excluded to protect flexibility in the future if required. Mr. Thomas felt that the impact of this proposal would be to give up control over a large section of the parish. Historically, the Parish Council was happy with no new development within 500m of Burnham Beeches SAC as included in the Draft Local Plan but special consideration is required concerning The Broadway. Mr. Thomas stated that there are some very large properties

being occupied by dwindling households which could be redeveloped into two smaller properties and that isn't a problem for the Parish. Mr. Thomas stated that if the Parish is considering a neighbourhood plan this proposal may cut through anything they may want to consider and could result in a village of large houses full of an ageing population. Mr. Milne asked what Mr. Rudd's view of splitting the villages was. Mr. Rudd advised that this has come from the City of London but also BC planners. It came forward with very clear wording in the Draft Local Plan but what puzzles him is in the proposal there is very little consideration of other options so it seems that they haven't expressly detailed how they've got to the point that this is the proposal being made. Mrs. Rolfe added that they haven't disclosed other options that they have considered such as fencing off areas. One of the major issues is that the City of London are concerned about pollution and if more households visit, the pollution in the air will affect the trees. Mr. Rudd said that the significant international status of Burnham Beeches SAC gives very strong backing to protecting it but it appears that the parish is taking the brunt of the impact without it being explained why. Mr. Milne asked the County Councillors present for comment. Cllr. Dhillon said that the current change of use rules would allow the conversion of office and retail space to residential accommodation as long as owners were not developing the units further. He advised that the consultation came in as every application around Burnham Beeches SAC in the last 10-15 years has been objected to by Burnham Beeches SAC and the planning officers have largely ignored the comments submitted. It has become apparent that these developments have affected the water table, air quality and traffic management around the site. Parish Councillors felt that the Parish Council has to be very clear that the Parish Council probably agrees but the definition of net additional housing must be made clear. It was acknowledged that Burnham Beeches has been suffering for a while. The Chairman said the way the proposal is currently written it doesn't explain it as Mr. Rudd just did so firstly the Parish Council needs clarity and secondly something about not allowing the village centre to become derelict due to changes in the economy. The Chairman confirmed that overall control will be with the BC planners and stated that there needs to be special circumstances that are allowed for consideration in planning applications if required. Mrs. Tipping advised that a prime example was the parking that used to exist behind the betting shop which was lost when the flats above were built and the spaces were taken for occupiers of the flats. Mrs. Rolfe advised that clarification was needed about the ecology evidence reviewed and the options considered. Lastly, Mrs. Rolfe advised that the plan proposed meant that the funds raised would go to the City of London and asked whether the Parish Council should request that the funds go to the Parish Council for the good of the local community. Mr. Rudd said that S106 monies must be used to mitigate the effects of the development so any Parish Council spending of the monies would need to embrace this. Mr. Rudd then raised concerns regarding the calculation made by Burnham Beeches SAC as he felt they could be claiming future funds to deal with existing problems. He advised that the Footfall Report showed 11% growth in visitor numbers with 4% coming from Buckinghamshire, 5% from Slough and the balance from Windsor yet all of the mitigation costs calculated are being charged to Buckinghamshire. Mrs. Rolfe asked whether the money could be used for schools but the Chairman confirmed that this was not possible. He also advised that a small percentage of developments in Buckinghamshire will suffer all the costs. Mr. Milne advised that in Mrs. Quilter's report following the latest Burnham Beeches meeting, she had advised that Slough had reached an agreement with Burnham Beeches SAC to receive their S106 monies. The Chairman asked which of the issues discussed the Parish Councillors wanted to include in the response. Mr. Rudd suggested that there is a case to raise in the way in which the proposal presents the calculation as he felt the way they want to obtain money falls outside of the S106 guidance and that the areas effected by new developments will have their own CiL moneys available. It was agreed that these issues should be raised in the response. Mr. Rudd suggested phrasing the response positively and sensibly. The Chairman asked whether any Parish Councillor wanted anything else mentioned in the response. No further issues were raised. Mr. Rudd left the meeting.

20/78/PC Open Spaces:

78.1 To consider quotes received for the proposed project for the strip of land next to Kingsway Green – the Clerk advised that although she had received quotes for the installation of the flowerbeds and for the planting and ongoing maintenance the contractor who had agreed to install the beds had now withdrawn from the project. It was therefore agreed that further discussion needed to take place regarding this project and that this should be done by the Kingsway Green, The Broadway and Village Flowers Working Group. The Clerk agreed to arrange a virtual meeting.

78.2 To consider quotes received for the arboriculture work identified in the 2019 report – the Chairman asked the

Clerk to remind councillors of the quotes received, details of which had already been circulated to all councillors. Mr. Milne, in his capacity as Chair of the Open Spaces Working Group, then recommended the acceptance of the quote received from Able Environmental Management Group due to the inclusion of traffic management which had been an issue previously. **This was agreed.**

78.3 To consider recommendations regarding the Signage Policy and the Promotional Materials Policy to better support/encourage local businesses. – the chairman asked Mr. Home to comment on this item. Mr. Home advised that when he reviewed the Promotional Materials Policy with Mr. Milne they felt the policy needed to be simplified and also suggested amendments extending the period advertising could remain in place to three weeks but allowed for longer if no other signs were requested. In addition, the revised policy would allow for some commercial advertising within tight conditions. Those present confirmed they had read the draft amended policy and **agreed it**. Mr. Milne added that they were not recommending changes to the Signage Policy but that the policy should remain in place so any breaches needed to be reported to the Clerk. The Clerk was asked to circulate the Signage Policy to all councillors.

20/79/PC Finance:

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

Mr. Milne, as Chair of the Finance Committee, advised that BC had now invoiced the cleaning costs of the public conveniences from 1 April 2020 to 2 September 2020 and that was why a number of invoices were included in this month's cashbook. The payments and receipts, as per the cashbook, **were approved.**

79.2 To consider the purchase of new noticeboards

Those councillors present confirmed they had received the quotes obtained by the Clerk and the Chairman recommended that the quote received from Earth Anchors was accepted. **This was agreed. It was also agreed** that the Clerk would notify the TfB LAT of the Parish Council's intention to install a noticeboard on the grass verge of Church Road and that this would also be notified to St. Mary's Church. There was a brief discuss regarding the colour of the noticeboard and the Clerk agreed to circulate the options to all councillors for a decision.

20/80/PC Planning:

80.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

The Planning Comments **were ratified.**

80.2 To note recent planning decisions

The Planning decisions **were noted.**

80.3 Mrs. Rolfe expressed her surprise that the application concerning Crown Lane Nursery was approved with no conditions considering the size of the proposed reservoir and potential safety risk. The Chairman suggested writing to Planning about potential health and safety concerns. The Chairman asked the Clerk to add this to the agenda for the next Planning Working Group meeting. Mr. Home said the addition of a ladder to climb out of the reservoir was very important for individuals who are visiting the site on their own.

80.4 Mr. Milne advised that he had received a very useful email from Mr Pilosov, a resident, regarding the aerial at Ponds Wood and he would like this issue to be added to the agenda for the next Planning Working Group meeting.

20/81/PC Any Other Business

81.1 Mr. Home asked for approval for a Community Payback Project budget of £2,000. The Clerk advised that she would email all councillors regarding this after the meeting and then, if agreed, add the item to the agenda of the September 2020 meeting for ratification.

81.2 Mr. Milne asked about any progress with the wider Kingsway Green project and the memorial bench. The Clerk advised that it was necessary for the Working Group to meeting (virtually) to take this forward. The Clerk was asked to arrange this meeting.

81.3 Mr. Home advised that he had sent an email to all parish councillors about putting together an active travel strategy and stated that he felt the Parish Council should formulate policies and strategies for this. He suggested to Cllr. Anthony, as Chair of the Beeches Community Board, that this is extended into the Board. Mr. Milne asked whether the paper circulated was his draft response. He confirmed it was but that further work and comment was necessary. Mr. Milne asked what should be done next. Mr. Home suggested thinking over the next few months about what councillors really want for the villages and what they want to do. Several councillors advised they would

be very happy to meet on Zoom to discuss this further. The Clerk agreed to arrange a Zoom meeting. Mr. Home asked whether Cllr. Anthony was happy for this to be discussed at the Beeches Community Board. Cllr. Anthony confirmed that he was

81.4 Mrs. Tipping suggested distributing leaflets to houses which have overgrown vegetation. Mr. Home said that would be great and the relevant leaflets had already been produced and were in the office but queried whether BC would ultimately enforce the rules. Cllr. Anthony stated that any enforcement issues can be referred through him and Cllr. Dhillon. Mrs. Tipping asked the Clerk to let her know when she was next in the office and she would collect some leaflets for distribution.

81.5 Mrs. Rolfe asked whether the Parish Council should ask the community whether they would like more wild flower verges to be planted. Mr. Milne reminded those present that the pilot was for three years. Cllr. Anthony said he felt the wild flowers looked spectacular. The Chairman suggested reviewing the pilot timescale and possibly revising it from three years to two years. Mr. Milne suggested that this was added to the September 2020 Parish Council meeting agenda.

81.6 The Chairman advised that at the FCSC Main Committee meeting, due to the sterling work carried out for the community by FCSC, he and Mrs. Quilter had suggested that the Parish Council grant a three month rent free period to be reimbursed to the Parish Council from the grant received from BC. All those present felt that this was a good idea and the Clerk agreed to add the item to the September 2020 Parish Council meeting agenda for formal ratification.

81.7 The Chairman also advised that at the FCSC Main Committee meeting, he had been asked whether the Parish Council, as the landlord, would provide financial support to purchase an ANPR camera for the entrance to car park. The Clerk advised that she would add the item to the September 2020 Parish Council meeting agenda. Mrs. Tipping apologised for stepping down as the Parish Council representative to FCSC.

81.8 Mrs. Tipping advised that she would like to adopt the telephone box outside Robin Parade. She and Mrs. Rolfe advised that a notice had been placed in the telephone box on 13 August 2020 stating that it must be adopted within 42 days. Mrs. Tipping said that BT will maintain the telephone. Mr. Milne asked why councillors were thinking of adopting the box and Mrs. Tipping and Mrs. Rolfe advised that if it wasn't adopted it would be removed. The Chairman asked what was involved with adoption and the Clerk agreed to recirculate the document previously received from BT and the seek councillors' comments on the idea. It was also suggested that the issue could be discussed by the Kingsway Green, The Broadway and Village Flowers Working Group.

81.9 Mrs. Tipping asked councillors to look at the entrance to The Broadway car park as she feels that maintenance work is required to the brick walls, plants and trees. Mr. Milne asked the Clerk to find out who is responsible for the walls of the raised beds.

81.10 Mr. Robinson said that he was glad that TfB were now looking at a crossing near Farnham Park Playing Fields as this had been applied for a few years ago via the LAF and got refused. Mr. Home clarified that the potential new crossing was not by Farnham Park Playing Fields it was by The Dukes Head.

81.11 Mr. Robinson confirmed that if Mr. Home could let him know when the Community Payback projects are booked for he will attend.

81.12 Mr. G Thomas, a resident, asked if community feedback from the summary of the traffic survey could be added to the September 2020 agenda.

20/82/PC Next meeting

The meeting closed at 21.30pm. The next meeting will be a virtual meeting on 28 September 2020 at 7.30pm. Details will be published with the agenda.

OPEN FORUM

Cllr. Anthony advised that things are continuing as usual at BC but it had been difficult in lockdown. All meetings are virtual meetings and with over 200 councillors it is hard for any individual councillor to be heard but BC have done an excellent job at managing Buckinghamshire through the crisis. The Chairman asked if the Parish Council was doing the right thing in guiding its community through the crisis. Cllr. Anthony said he thought so and there was good support for the Beeches Community Board which could make a significant contribution.

Cllr. Dhillon advised that the Beeches Community Board sub group for children and young people had met and the

application submitted to the LAF for traffic calming outside the infant school will be discussed on Wednesday. He stated that he didn't think that match funding should be required but will leave that to the Parish Council. He also stated that in Taplow and Dorney lots of issues regarding antisocial behaviour in the evenings were raised and BC confirmed that they are happy to provide a youth support worker who can go into schools to work with the young people. He urged that if funding was needed for this or to help with the Guide Hut the Parish Council could write to the Beeches Community Board Co-Ordinator and copy him in. Also, he mentioned the Farnhams Walkers and suggested that they might benefit from funding or support and asked the Parish Council to let him and the Co-ordinator know it this was the case.

Cllr. Dhillon advised that his IT system was going back to BC so he will be out of contact for 24 hours. He said he will try to attend the highways & infrastructure sub group meeting but if he can't he felt that the Parish Council representatives should pursue the drainage on The Broadway project.

Cllr. Dhillon said he had received complaints that reports to BC were being opened and closed the next day with no resolution. He advised that he will take this up with Cllr. Naylor as he is a lead member. Mrs. Rolfe stated that she had seen two complaints made about waste bins outside the village hall and in Templewood Lane and had suggested that the residents logged the issues on Fix My Street following which the bins were emptied the next day.

The Chairman advised that the elderly people sub group was meeting tomorrow and asked Cllr. Dhillon whether he had received any parishioner issues that should be passed on. He said not but would listen with interest.

Mr. Milne asked Cllr. Dhillon what he meant about match funding. Cllr. Dhillon advised that at the first meeting of the Beeches Community Board he raised that requiring match funding for projects was unfair as some parish councils can't afford it. He acknowledged that if some parish councils can afford it then the money would go further but stated that in the current climate no parish council can really afford it. The Chairman advised that FRPC's budget did contain a provision for match funding as these were the terms of the LAF but it was agreed that if the traffic calming scheme was match funded then another scheme, The Broadway drainage project should go ahead with no match funding.

Mr. Milne asked Cllr. Dhillon if he had asked BC if they are responsible for the kissing gates on footpaths in the parish and whether BC would repair the footpath in St Mary's Churchyard. Cllr. Dhillon advised that he would raise both of these with BC tomorrow morning and report back.