

FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 27 APRIL 2021 AT 6.30 P.M. VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present

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

Three members of the public, County Cllr. Dev Dhillon and County Cllr. David 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.

21/31/PC Apologies for absence

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

21/32/PC Declarations of Interest

None

21/33/PC To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 29 March 2021

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

21/34/PC Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda - for information only)

34.1 Update on 2021 Local Elections – the content of the information report was noted and the Chairman advised that two residents had expressed interest in joining the Parish Council. The Chairman was asked to ask the residents to contact the Clerk so that she could email the relevant application form to them.

34.2 Update on Parish Projects – the content of the information report was noted. Mr. Home was asked if he know when the traffic calming project outside the infant school in Farnham Common would be carried out and Cllr. Anthony suggested asking Jack Pearce, the Beeches Community Board Co-ordinator, for details of this. Mr. Milne stated that the Parish Council needs to prioritise the list of potential projects and create timelines for each one to avoid delays. It was noted that the next meeting of the Project Working Group was scheduled for 12 May 2021 and that all councillors are invited to attend.

21/35/PC To consider a timetable for returning to face to face meetings and reopening the office

35.1 The content of the information report was noted and the Chairman stated that deciding on a date for reopening the Parish Council office was entirely within the gift of the Parish Council. It was agreed, based on the current Government roadmap that the office should reopen two weeks after the 21 June 2021 being 5 July 2021.

35.2 With regard to holding face to face meetings, the content of the information report was noted and the Clerk advised that the decision following the recent court hearing was due by the end of the month. Cllr. Anthony was asked what Buckinghamshire Council felt the decision would be and he advised that he felt the application would be successful and establish that virtual meetings will be legal. It was agreed therefore to wait until the decision was reported before deciding on returning to face to face meetings.

21/36/PC To receive initial report on the Burnham Beeches Parking Review

Mrs. Quilter referred Parish Councillors to her email previously circulated following the initial meeting with Buckinghamshire Council. She advised that she and Cllr. Dhillon had attended a virtual meeting with Buckinghamshire Council a couple of weeks ago where Buckinghamshire Council presented the parking restrictions that they are considering putting in place and advised that these would shortly go to statutory consultation. Mrs. Quilter advised that it was necessary to wait for the full details but it appeared that anywhere there is currently cones would become a freeway, all existing double yellow lines would remain

and that there would be a resident only parking permit scheme on Beeches Road, Green Lane and Kingsway but the permits would not be specific to the road in which you lived, a resident could park in any of those roads. It was also noted that resident only permit parking would exist on roads that had off road parking for residents making parking for anyone else very difficult. It was suggested that the main concern caused by the proposed scheme is the displacement of vehicles to other local roads. It was noted that the mapping is all online and it was felt that the Parish Council played an important role in publicising the consultation and it was agreed that the noticeboards, website and Facebook page should be used. It was felt that it was key for parishioners to recognise that the proposed restrictions may not be on their road but may have an effect on them. Mrs. Quilter confirmed that she had asked Andy Barnard whether the car parks at Burnham Beeches SAC would be reopened and he had advised that this was considered on a fortnightly basis. Mrs. Quilter advised that the plans she had seen were very draft and an initial question was whether with the planned parking on Beeches Road there would be sufficient room for emergency vehicles. Mr. Milne raised concern about Kingsway being included in a resident parking permit scheme as traditionally shoppers park there and asked whether Golden Oak Close was included. Mrs. Quilter was unsure but advised she would look at the online mapping when it was available. The Clerk was asked to let all parish councillors know when the consultation was launched and Mrs. Quilter confirmed that she definitely would. The Chairman reiterated the concern that the potential restrictions would not solve the problem but would just disperse it on a thinner basis and advised that he was absolutely convinced they will just push the problem further away. Mrs Quilter agreed and stated that Rosewood Way is still close enough park in and walk to the village and/or Burnham Beeches SAC. It was noted that the proposals were part of a wider scheme including about 10 sites throughout the area. Permits will have to be paid for. Mrs. Rolfe advised that currently resident parking permits cost about £70 per year and Mr. Thomas asked what the payment was for and what the resident would receive in return for the payment. It was felt that residents would receive a parking space and that the spaces would be monitored by a Buckinghamshire Council parking officer. Mrs. Quilter was asked whether Andy Barnard wanted to reduce the number of visitors to Burnham Beeches SAC. She advised that she did ask him but he focuses on Covid19 and the increase in visitors it caused, managing footfall and protecting the site. Mrs. Quilter advised that Buckinghamshire Council had not been clear on how the consultation would be publicised and that the Parish Council should ensure that this was done properly as everyone should have a chance to contribute.

21/37/PC Finance:

37.1 To review the 2020/21 Annual Management Accounts

Mr. Milne, as Chair of the Finance Committee, asked those present to confirm that they had reviewed the management accounts and accompanying notes. Those present confirmed they had.

He noted that the important columns were the December forecast and the end of year actual and that there were some big differences caused by late invoices which would be included in the annual accounts accruals but not in the management accounts which were prepared on a cash basis. He therefore noted that the balance carried forward to 2021/22 in the management accounts had changed from £46,000 to £86,000 but this would be different in the annual accounts once the accruals had been applied. Mr. Milne asked those present whether they had any comments and those present confirmed not. The management accounts **were agreed**. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for the detailed notes provided.

37.2 To consider Farnham Common Sports Club's grant request

Mr. Thomas advised that his email request had been circulated by the Clerk to all parish councillors. The Club was asking for (and had actually had done) a digital survey of the building and curtilage including the guide hut and play area. He continued that the purpose for the building survey is for future planning as the building is currently a rabbit warren of rooms which is not great for its purpose. He had approached Trevor Clapp, a local architect, about repositioning the rooms inside and Mr. Clapp had recommended having a survey done.

The Club decided to include the outdoor ground as well in case during the review different sports were identified or it was desirable to move existing sports around the site then heights, widths etc. would be needed.

Mr. Thomas advised that the cost of the surveys was £1,950 for the building and £1,800 for the topographical one and that the Club was asking for a payment equal to half the cost from the Parish Council.

Mr. Thomas was asked whether the Club could reclaim the VAT. He advised that a partial reclaim could be made but this was based on how much of the Club's activity was sport related versus none sport i.e. food and drink sales.

Mrs. Rolfe stated that she felt the survey was needed to help the Club plan and also to help the Parish Council formulate its plans for the playground and guide hut area. She therefore had no problem with the

request if the Parish Council received a copy of the surveys. Mr. Thomas advised he would be happy to provide a copy even if the Parish Council did not support a contribution towards the cost and advised that M. Clapp, a former Chairman of the Parish Council, felt the Club should have long term plans. He continued that grants and financing for sports facilities comes in dribs and drabs so if expected funding is not received a club can only do part of what is needed so it is important to have a long term plan.

Mr. Thomas was asked whether the Club had made contact with Farnham Park Playing Fields to discuss any future plans they may have. Mr. Thomas advised that there had been talk of redevelopment of that site for many years and that it was being taken over by softball and football which the Club doesn't compete in so the only duplicated sport is rugby.

Mrs. Quilter advised that if the surveys provide benefit for the playground and guide hut review then she would support a 50% contribution.

Mr. Milne advised that he was reticent to agree to a 50% contribution as although he is delighted that the Club is offering a new sport in lacrosse and he hopes it gets off the ground the Parish Council is not a grant giving body and despite this has given a lot of money to the Club over the years. He advised that this year's Parish Council budget only included £500 of such requests due to these difficult times and that strict budgeting was necessary. He noted that the Parish Council has its own projects to fund. He also questioned how helpful the surveys would be to the Parish council's playground and guide hut area project. He advised that he would support a payment of up to £500.

Mr. Thomas advised that some parish councillors did not know how the Club started. He continued that the Club started in 1958 on the site which was a meadow and was useless. The Club was granted a lease by the Parish Council and the founder members dug trenches, put in electricity etc. and rarely asked for money despite every year paying rent to the Parish Council of £1,000. Mr. Thomas felt that it would cost over £2million to replace the Club and that the Club was therefore the Parish Council's biggest asset. He advised that before lockdown there were 700 members with 50% of these being under 18 years old and that the Club is a local community amateur sports club run by volunteers with one paid employee.

He stated that, in his opinion, the Club rarely asks the Parish Council for help but did seek help with a CCTV system which also helps neighbouring residents and the removal of sheds with asbestos. He continued that the Club is run and financed by the community and has gone from nothing in a wooden shed to a £2million assets due to the hard work of volunteers.

Mr. Milne stated that he felt rather offended by Mr. Thomas' comments and that he doesn't understand the comments on profit as the Club pays a peppercorn rent and the Parish Council has made no profit when this is balanced against donations. He supported the request for assistance with removing the sheds due to health and safety concerns. He didn't support the request regarding the roof but acknowledged that maybe he should have and noted that the Parish Council paid for the tarmac at the ground. He advised that he volunteered for 10 years on one of the committees at the Club. He noted that the Club is one of many organisations within parish.

Mr. Home advised that his comments were in line with Mr. Milne and he felt the Club can raise funds itself. He continued that the Scouts had to raise their own funds. He felt that the Club does a lot of good in the community but is able to look after itself.

Mr. Milne advised that whatever amount is agreed there would need to be an agreement of the boundary between the leased and non-leased land before any money is given.

The Chairman advised that he had heard the comments of Mr. Thomas and Mr. Milne but what he was also hearing was that there are massive issues for the country in terms of both physical and mental fitness and he would like the Club to survive and thrive. He feels that clubs such as Farnham Common Sports Club will help people get out of some fairly serious health problems so the parish needs social facilities to help people through and capture some of the good things Covid19 may have left us. The Chairman stated that Mr. Thomas had agreed to give a copy of the surveys to the Parish Council which is needed to sort out plans for the playground and guide hut area and he therefore felt the Parish Council should be paying at least 25% of the survey costs as a minimum contribution and felt that he could get this figure to 50% with additional voluntary contributions.

Mr. Home advised that he was happy to contribute for the benefit received and if the Parish Council need to apply for grants for the playground and guide hut area project then this information would be needed. The position was reviewed and it was felt that three options had been discussed:

1. Contributing £500
2. Contributing at least 25% but possibly 50% with sponsorship
3. Contributing 50%

It was agreed by all that payment would not be made until an invoice had been received.

Mrs. Rolfe propose a payment of £1,500 as she felt it was important for the community that the Parish Council develop the children's playground and guide hut area and that this was not an unreasonable amount to pay for the use of the surveys by the public. Mr. Milne stated that he was not sure the surveys would be required and that the Parish Council doesn't yet have a timeline for the playground and guide hut area project.

The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council provides £1,500 and he will personal seek sponsorship to increase the contribution to 50%. The Chairman was asked to ignore the sponsorship issue as this just complicated things. The proposed resolution was changed to the Parish Council provides £1,500. The Chairman, Mrs. Quilter and Mrs. Rolfe voted for the resolution and Mr. Home and Mr. Milne voted against. Mr. Thomas did not vote due to his position as Chairman of the Cub. **It was agreed** that the Parish Council would contribute £1,500 towards the cost of the surveys.

Subsequently, Mr. Home asked what proportion of the survey would benefit the Parish Council. The Chairman advised about 25%. Mr. Home felt that a payment equal to half of the topographical survey would be acceptable to him which was £900.

Mr. Thomas thanked the Parish Council for agreeing to a payment of £1,500.

37.3 To consider The Rotary Club Burnham Beeches' grant request

The Clerk advised that the Rotary Club had requested a payment of £500 towards the cost of its planned open day. Mr. Milne advised that the Parish Council held ring fenced reserves of approximately £1,800 from which the payment could be taken. A payment of £500 **was agreed**.

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

The payments and receipts, as per the cashbook, **were agreed**.

21/38/PC Planning:

Mrs. Rolfe, as Chair of the Planning Working Group, noted that there had been an increase in planning applications and that there was a backlog in Planning Enforcement matters. The Clerk thanked Cllr. Anthony for his assistance with one planning enforcement issue.

38.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

The Planning Comments **were ratified**.

38.2 To note recent planning decisions

The Planning decisions **were noted**.

21/39/PC Any Other Business (for information only)

39.1 The Clerk noted that she had received complaints about rats in Temple Dell and it was suggested that she approach the contractor for advice regarding this.

21/40/PC Next Meeting

The meeting closed at 7.55pm. The next meeting will be on 17 May 2021 at 7.30pm. Details will be published with the agenda.

OPEN FORUM

The Chairman invited questions from the public. No questions were put forward.

The Chairman invited the County Councillors to provide any updates

Cllr. Dhillon advised that he was seeking a wide public consultation regarding the Buckinghamshire Council parking review and had suggested using the library for an exhibition. He advised that every house on an effected road will receive a leaflet and the parish magazine, local press and social media are also being used so people know there is a consultation. He advised that Buckinghamshire Council hope to the restrictions finalised by September 2021. He also asked the Parish Council and Buckinghamshire Council officers to think if an exhibition cannot be held in the library due to Covid19 whether there could be a marquee on the green at Burnham Beeches SAC so everyone can look at the plans.

Cllr. Dhillon also advised that a resident had raised concerns regarding a development of Templewood Lane and he had referred the concerns to Planning Enforcement and TfB. The Chairman felt that the area effected does seem like public land so asked to the Parish Council to be kept informed.

Cllr. Anthony advised that Buckinghamshire Council has agreed that a Parish Council can call in a planning application to the Planning Committee but the objection(s) must be related to planning policy and the Parish Council must attend the meeting and endorse the policies.