

## Information for the Parish Council Meeting on 25 October 2021

### 3 Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda - for information only)

#### 3.1 Update on Buckinghamshire Council's Parish Charter

Buckinghamshire Council have issued an All Councils Charter which aims to provide a framework for all councils to work together to serve the people of Buckinghamshire. It sets out the relationship between town and parish councils in Buckinghamshire and Buckinghamshire Council

At a recent South Bucks Association of Local Council's (SBALC) meeting attended by the Chair, it was confirmed that SBALC had reviewed the Charter and fed back to Buckinghamshire Council during its production. As a result of this and because it was confirmed that the document is a series of guidelines rather than actions that must be followed, it was agreed that SBALC would sign the Charter on behalf of its members rather than individual parish councils signing it.

A copy of the Charter has been circulated to councillors separately.

#### 3.2 Update on Buckinghamshire Council's Councillor Code of Conduct 2020

Buckinghamshire Council has issued its updated Councillor Code of Conduct. It has been recommended by Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (BALC) that all town and parish councils in Buckinghamshire adopt this for their council to use as their Code of Conduct as they state that by adopting the principal authorities code, should any complaints be passed to the Monitoring Officer, it makes it easier to investigate any breaches of the Code.

It is therefore being suggested that a small group of parish councillors review the new Code of Conduct and report back to the November 2021 parish council meeting.

A copy of the Code of Conduct has been circulated to councillors separately.

#### 3.3 Update on broadband issue being experienced by some Farnham Royal residents

At the September 2021 parish council meeting, the broadband issue experienced by some residents in Farnham Royal was discussed. Marilyn Rolfe, Vice Chair of the Parish Council has had several very positive discussions with Swish Fibre who are currently installing fibre cabling throughout areas of Buckinghamshire. They have already installed fibre in Beaconsfield and are currently working in Chalfont St Peter and Gerrards Cross. Swish Fibre is a new company who are extremely positive and energetic with extending their roll out of fibre throughout Buckinghamshire.

Swish Fibre have agreed to conduct a feasibility study into the viability of supplying fibre connections within the Farnhams and are in the process of preparing this. The final decision will be a commercial decision for Swish Fibre dependent on the interest they receive. Any residents experiencing difficulties with their broadband are encouraged to register their interest at <https://portal.swishfibre.com>. This will give encouragement to Swish Fibre for the project which will hopefully enable, in a relatively short period of time, a resolution to the broadband issue some residents experience in Farnham Royal.

#### 3.4 Update on Christmas in the Farnhams

On Saturday 4 December 2021, the Parish Council in partnership with the United Benefice of Farnham Royal with Hedgerley and Burnham Beeches Rotary are hosting 'Christmas in the Farnhams'.

The event will start at 2.00pm at St John's Church, Victoria Road when the Christmas Tree Festival will be opened. This Festival will be a collection of beautifully decorated trees created by local businesses and organisations.

At 4.00pm there will be 'Carols at the Dell' at Temple Dell, Templewood Lane. This will be an opportunity to come together as a community to sing festive songs around a lit tree. We hope to be joined by children from the local schools and some local choirs/singing groups. Burnham Beeches rotary have kindly agreed to provide hot refreshments, mulled wine and mince pies. Farnham Common Infant School have kindly agreed to allow parking in their car park for the event.

In an effort to encourage people back to the high street, we have spoken to the majority of the shops and businesses on The Broadway to see whether they would be willing to stay open late on that evening to enable residents and visitors to shop or enjoy a meal or takeaway. The response was positive and we just need to put a proper plan together.

It was suggested by one of the shops that the Parish Council should run a Christmas window competition for the shops and businesses along The Broadway.

In addition, we have spoken to Sue Strange, who has previously arranged the very popular trails around the parish for Easter, Christmas and Halloween. We will be working with her on a Christmas 2021 trail.

#### **4 To consider Buckinghamshire Council's Public Consultation on Parking, Movement and Speed Orders**

Using the feedback received during their informal parking review earlier this year, Buckinghamshire Council have now proceeded to a formal consultation on revised plans. Details of the consultation can be found on <https://www.buckinghamshiretraffweb.uk/> in the "Public Consultation" section under Scheme 005. The roads included are Bedford Drive, Beeches Road, Blackpond Lane, Crown Lane, Devonshire Green, Egypt Lane, Green Lane, Hawthorn Lane, Hill Place, Kingsway, Scotlands Drive, Seren Place, Stewarts Drive, Thompkins Lane and Victoria Road. The consultation closes on 8 November 2021.

#### **5 To consider Terms of Reference and membership of the Contracts Working Group**

At the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, it was suggested that a new working group was formed to consider and make recommendations regarding the various contracts the Parish Council enters into. This group will also agree and carry out appropriate performance management in respect of the various contracts and deal with any tendering process to appoint new contractors.

Richard Thomas has agreed to join the group and following a discussion with the Chair and Vice Chair, the Clerk has asked Roger Home and Alan Wright, both of whom are residents, have expressed a willingness to help and have an interest in this area to also join.

A copy of the draft terms of reference has been circulated to councillors.

#### **6 To consider Policies:**

##### **6.1 Commemorative Acts Policy (New)**

It was agreed at the September 2021 parish council meeting that this new policy would be drafted to give guidance to councillors and residents regarding a request for a lasting memorial within the parish following the death of a loved one. A copy of the draft policy has been circulated to councillors.

##### **6.2 Communication and Involvement policy (Amendments)**

This policy was reviewed at the September 2021 parish council meeting and it was agreed that it would be amended to bring it up to date. A copy of the draft, amended policy has been circulated to councillors.

#### **7 Finance:**

##### **7.1 To consider the 2020/21 External Auditor's Report**

The 2020/21 External Audit has been completed. The external auditor advised that the figure relating to the total value of cash and short term investments in the Accounting Statement contained within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return incorrectly included an amount of £331 that had been accounted for as a payment out of the cashbook but had not yet been taken as a direct debit from the bank account. The payment was taken after the year end. The external auditor therefore requested that the figure stated was increased by £331.

The figures disclosed in the Accounting Statement are provided by the parish council's accountant and the clerk will ensure that the accountant has, in future, made any necessary adjustments in this regard.

A copy of the Report and Certificate has been circulated to councillors.

### **7.2 To consider the 30 September 2021 Management Accounts**

The management accounts and accompanying notes have been circulated to councillors.

### **7.3 To approve payments and note receipts, as per the cashbook**

The cashbook has been reviewed and approved by the interim Chair of the Finance Committee and has been circulated to councillors separately.

### **7.4 To approve a budget of £1,000 for expenditure relating to Christmas in the Farnhams**

As can be seen in item 3.4 above, lots is planned for Christmas in the Farnhams and costs will be incurred in respect of printing and distribution of event leaflets, additional lighting at the Dell and prizes for the window competition and parish trail etc. Having spoken to Jack Pearce, Co-ordinator of the Beeches Community Board, it may be appropriate to make a funding application to the Welcome Back Fund within Buckinghamshire Council which could reimburse the parish council for the costs incurred but in the first instance parish councillors are being asked to approve a budget of £1,000 in respect of expenditure

## **8 Planning:**

### **8.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications**

The schedule of comments submitted to the planning authority has been circulated to councillors.

### **8.2 To note recent planning decisions**

The schedule of planning authority decisions has been circulated to councillors.