

FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

Judith Hall
Clerk to the Council
clerk@farnhamroyal-pc.gov.uk
01753 648497

Sherriff House
The Broadway
Farnham Common
SL2 3QH

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7.30 P.M. VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present

Mr. Paul Rowley (Chairman) Mr. Bob Milne
Mrs. Marilyn Rolfe Mr. Roger Home
Mr. Richard Thomas Mrs. Judith Hall – Clerk
Two members of the public, County Cllr. Marlene Lewis and County Cllr. 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.

20/104/PC Apologies for absence

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

20/105/PC Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

20/106/PC To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 26 October 2020

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

20/107/PC Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda - for information only)

107.1 Update on Community Payback projects – Mr. Home advised that the work on Footpath 4 had been completed at a total cost of £596. The A355 Millwood Nursery North project is underway with good progress but work will continue throughout December so additional toilet hire will be required but the project should still be completed within the budget but it was agreed (for ratification at the next meeting) that an additional £500 should be added to the budget. The Supervisor working on Sunday asked Mr. Home for additional work. Mr. Home advised that he had walked all the footpaths in the Parish and there isn't a lot of project work mostly little bits and pieces. Mr. Milne suggested the area opposite the Millwood Nursery site but Mr. Home advised this was included in the work agreed by TfB. He continued that although he had received an update following contact with Cllr. Naylor he was still waiting for a completion date. The Chairman asked whether there were other areas in the Parish that the Community Payback Scheme could be used. Mr. Home said possibly footpaths but we would need the landowners' permission. It was agreed that Parish Councillors should have a think and make suggestions for projects. Mr. Home advised that the Scheme will repeat the projects currently being undertaken as and when required. It was agreed that the Clerk would put a list of potential projects together. Mr. Milne asked whether clearing Boundary Copse would be appropriate. Mr. Home said there would be practical problems that would need to be addressed such as vehicle access and skip placement but it could be reviewed. It was agreed that site visits would be carried out to help develop a list. The Chairman thanked Mr. Home for his work on this item and expressed his satisfaction at the work being carried out.

107.2 Update regarding Burnham Beeches and local road parking issues

The Chairman advised that the area in question was deemed as very dangerous so there was a meeting between him and Mrs. Rolfe on behalf of the Parish Council, Cllr. Dhillon on behalf of BC and Andy Barnard on behalf of Burnham Beeches SAC. There are ongoing discussions between Burnham Beeches SAC and BC about traffic control and although an outcome is not known Cllr. Dhillon was able to get a Parking Order suspending parking in the area and bollards have been put in Hawthorn Lane and Green Lane. In addition, Andy Barnard is working on ways to address the overspill and the Parish Council is preparing notices advertising The Broadway Car Park as an alternative. Mr. Banks worked to get the Infant School to agree to allow their car park to be used as additional weekend parking but Mr. Barnard is reluctant to do this until he ascertains whether there is an actual problem. A paper is being developed by BC about

their discussions with Burnham Beeches SAC which the Parish Council should receive in due course. Mrs. Rolfe added that Mr. Barnard is going to install cameras for parking charging on site at Burnham Beeches SAC and residents are unhappy with the announcement that parking charges will apply seven days a week. She continued that the Parish Council did request that this was deferred but this was rejected by the Trustees of Burnham Beeches SAC.

107.3 Update on Community Board projects and feedback from Board Meetings

107.3.1 Mrs. Rolfe advised that the Board was still reviewing needs and requirements and that the Thames Valley playground was seeking c.£2,000 and that Dorney Youth Centre and Playgroup was seeking £2,500 for PPE equipment and repairs. She also advised that time was spent going through data showing how many vulnerable people there are in the area and she hoped that the Farnham Royal Charities could help assist vulnerable people within the Parish but it would be necessary to make sure people aren't doubled up. The Chairman asked whether the information would be available from BC and the Clerk felt they would be reluctant to give this information to the Charities for confidentiality and GDPR reasons so the Charities may just have to give a donation to assist BC with its efforts. Mrs. Rolfe advised that gifts to the residents of Farnham Common House and Chandos Lodge had been agreed and that Mrs. Tipping was working on a gift suitable for Warren Court residents.

The Chairman advised that the Elderly sub group had been considering Good Neighbourhood Schemes to broaden the Neighbourhood Watch remit. Mr. Banks advised that the Covid Support Group had good intelligence about where the vulnerable people are so suggested that councillors ask Mr. Thomas and advised that Mrs. Blakemore is arranging Hampers on behalf of the Scouts.

Mr. Chapman advised that the Clare Foundation was looking at a device that enabled people to use their televisions as communication devices (Kraydel) and would like some names put forward for the pilot scheme.

Mrs. Rolfe reminded those present of the spreadsheet regarding flooding issues that was being put together for BC. Mr Home advised he had sent details to Jack Pearce, the Beeches Community Board Co-ordinator, directly but agreed to forward them to Mr. Rolfe for inclusion on the spreadsheet.

Mr. Home asked whether the Dorney roundabout was approved and Mrs. Rolfe confirmed that it was and he expressed his surprise that BC had £15,000 to put towards the project. Mrs. Rolfe advised that the project was going ahead due to obtaining a good deal from a contractor.

107.3.2 Mr. Home advised that the Parish Council was asked to submit several projects for funding requests following discussion with Cllr. Dhillon and Cllr. Anthony but that it is unclear whether they need to be matchfunded. Mr. Home suggested that the Parish Council needs tuition on funding options. Mr. Home listed the four projects as follows:

1. Pedestrian/cycle crossing on Farnham Lane in the vicinity of Bishops Orchard and realignment of Cycle Route 461 via Bishops Orchard as a safety enhancement for pedestrians and cyclists
2. Resubmission of the requirement to install a footway in Blackpond Lane between the existing footways near Hawthorn Lane and Long Close as a safety enhancement for pedestrians.
3. Remedy flooding of the footway near ATS Tyres
4. Relocate drop kerbs at the junction of Templewood Lane and the A355 away from the confliction point at the junction as this would provide a safe distance between the A355 and the area where pedestrians will cross to allow sufficient time for drivers and pedestrians to see one another. This project has also been submitted directly to TfB at the request of Zunara Aslam, a Technician at TfB.

Mr. Milne said that Cllr. Anthony has requested at least twice that all projects should be submitted to the Community Board. The Clerk confirmed that the 31 October 2020 deadline for Community Board applications had been extended to 31 December 2020.

20/108/PC Covid 19

108.1 To consider a timetable for returning to face to face meetings and reopening the office

The Chairman recommended continuing with virtual meetings and that the Clerk continued to work from home and **this was agreed.**

108.2 To consider whether if any BC and/or National Government material is released it should be distributed/displayed in the parish

The Clerk advised that she had now received confirmation from BC that any material released would be distributed and/or displayed in the Parish by BC directly.

108.3 To consider a small expense for a contractor to action 4.2 above, if required.

The Clerk advised that she had also received confirmation from BC that there would be no cost to the Parish Council.

20/109/PC To consider adopting the Draft Active Travel Strategy

Mr. Home advised that the Parish Council was trying to follow what the government was proposing in its own documents. Mr. Milne highlighted the conflict in certain areas between pedestrians and cyclists and cyclists and cars and expressed his unease at this. He also shared a reservation that the Parish Council

seemed to be supporting traffic calming in two locations at which he was not convinced it was appropriate. Mr. Home acknowledged that there would be problems as the road infrastructure is still based on a horse and cart and agreed that conflict needs to be avoided. The Chairman clarified that the idea is to get the strategy out there and then work on how the Parish Council, with other organisations, is going to achieve it. Mr. Home advised it was important to have an aspirational travel strategy which may never be achieved but without a plan it will definitely never be achieved. Mr. Thomas advised that the amount of money that is required to achieve the projects identified in the strategy is phenomenal. Mr. Home acknowledged this and advised that funding was being made available in other areas in the County. The Chairman asked whether Parish Councillors were happy to adopt the strategy and publicise it. **It was agreed** that the Strategy would be adopted. Mr. Thomas said that it would be necessary to manage residents' expectations in a statement issued with it.

20/110/PC Finance:

110.1 To receive a report from the latest Finance Committee meeting regarding the 2021/22 budget projection and assumptions

Mr. Milne, as Chairman of the Finance Committee, asked whether those present had reviewed the draft 2021/22 budget and three year projection. Those present confirmed they had. Mr. Milne advised it was based on what was agreed when setting this year's budget in January 2020. Mr. Milne discussed the reserves position over the three year period and reported that the minimum reserves would be achieved by the end of the third year. Mr Chairman added that the Parish Council has contracts with terms dictating annual price increases and that the Parish Council is advised to have certain reserves by regulations and the internal auditors. He continued that in year three the reserves are as recommended and there is the ability to save for projects. The Chairman also advised that the budget included a 3% precept increase. Mr. Milne advised that the Committee is not currently recommending a precept amount but wanted to get an idea from councillors. He asked councillors to remember that expenses could rise and raised the increases experience this year with the arboriculture work. He advised that the Clerk had instructed the arboriculturist to carry out the report and would then seek prices from contractors ahead of finalising the budget to avoid this issue again next year.

Mr. Home commented that the amount included for LAF match funding was not enough to match fund any of the projects applied for and should be at least £20,000 and more likely more citing the possible crossing and playground and Guide Hut projects. Mrs. Rolfe felt that his comment highlighted that the Parish Council would need grant funding as it can't rely on raising precept. Mr. Home expressed that a rise of 50% in the precept would allow the Parish Council to carry out some of the much needed projects. Mr. Milne queried the difference between projects that are the responsibility of BC and projects that are the responsibility of the Parish Council. Cllr. Anthony advised that all projects should be submitted to the Beeches Community Board and BC would decide what to do. Mr. Milne queried why the Parish Council should be expected to matchfund projects when the work is the responsibility of BC. He advised that the Parish Council was one of the only local Parish Councils that took on Devolved Services from BC. It was noted that Stoke Poges put up its precept to carry out projects on its own land and Mr. Milne felt that if the Parish Council has to put up the precept it should be for projects on Parish Council land so for the Guide Hut and playground projects. He continued that as these projects are not due to start until 2024 there is time to decide when to put up the precept. Mr. Home expressed his concern that in that scenario none of the projects applied for will happen and urged that the Parish Council must start putting funds away as it can't rely on have a budget surplus in the relevant year. The Chairman suggested that he and the Clerk would write to all councillors seeking the way forward. The Clerk suggested that it would be sensible for all councillors to attend the January 2021 Finance Committee meeting.

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

Mr. Milnes advised that the cashbook contained two months of invoicing for some regular suppliers as there was no meeting in December 2020. He also asked the Clerk to make it clearer which month is being paid for each item.

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

110.3 To consider replacing broken glass at the Kingsway Bus Shelter

The Chairman advised that the quote from Progress Services, the appointed contractor, to replace the glass was £295 but said that the Parish Council could use something more substantial which could house advertising. Mr. Home asked what the value of the glass was in terms of whether people look through the glass to look for the bus and stated that if the glass serves no function then a solid end panel for displaying notices would be a good idea. A budget of up to £400 **was agreed** if it was possible/feasible to install a solid end panel.

20/111/PC Planning:

111.1 To receive report of latest Planning Working Group meeting

Mrs. Rolfe advised that quite a lot of planning applications were granted conditional permission during the last month but one was refused. She advised that BC have approved living accommodation being placed

in a swimming pool house but have included a condition that it can only be used by a member of the household. They have also requested a S.106 contribution in respect of the development. Mrs. Rolfe wished to draw councillors attention to the new Slough Neighbourhood Plan which had just been published. She agreed to send the Clerk a link to the document as she felt all councillors should review it and comment as it comes up to the parish boundaries.

Mrs. Rolfe also advised that the Planning Working Group had considered the approach from Berkley Homes for a discussion but had taken the decision not talk to them as the land appears to be on Green Belt and the Parish Council's relevant policy is very clear. Mr. Thomas agreed with this decision but stated that it seemed strange that if the Parish Council made it clear in advance of any meeting that it would not support any application and would not help the developer, that a meeting could not be held to see what the developer had in mind.

Mrs. Rolfe also advised that Howard MacPherson had attended the last Planning Working Group meeting as he wished to clarify the details of his application, which was refused by BC, for an easement across The Broadway car park. She continued that the working group members agreed to review the correspondence for a final discussion on 4 December 2020 but that their provisional decision was that their opinion regarding the application had not changed.

111.2 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

The Planning Comments **were ratified**.

111.3 To note recent planning decisions

The Planning decisions **were noted**.

20/112/PC Any Other Business (for information only)

112.1 The Clerk was asked to chase BC about the Christmas light equipment that was fitted to the lampposts that were replaced by BC.

112.2 Mr. Home thanked the residents for their efforts to clear their overgrown vegetation in the footpath between Blackpond Lane and Hawthorn Lane.

112.3 Mr Home advised that he had walked to Park Road through Farnham Park and the pedestrian entrance was closed. He asked Cllr. Dhillon whether BC was planning to permanently close this. Cllr. Dhillon said this area would come under the Stoke Poges and Wexham Ward so he was unable to answer the question but if Mr. Home provided him with the details he would ask TfB.

112.4 Mrs. Rolfe asked whether to assist the Farnham Royal Relief in Sickness Charities with their plans to help parishioners this Christmas the Parish Council would pay for the items required on the understanding that the Charities would reimburse them. The Chairman suggested raising this with the internal auditor. Mr. Milne felt that a letter would be required from the Charities confirming the 'loan'. In principle, those present were happy to provide the requested assistance.

112.5 Mrs. Rolfe raised the recent letter received from a resident regarding litter in the Parish and the bins. Mrs. Rolfe suggested checking how often the bins are emptied by BC. Cllr. Dhillon asked the Clerk to forward the email to him and Mrs. Rolfe asked for the bin at Victoria Road/Parsonage Lane to be added.

112.6 Cllr. Dhillon was thanked for his efforts in getting the Parking Order. Cllr. Dhillon advised that the current Order was in force until 14 December 2020.

20/113/PC Next Meeting

The meeting closed at 21.25. The next meeting will be a virtual meeting on 25 January 2021 at 7.30pm. Details will be published with the agenda.

OPEN FORUM

David Banks raised that a resident near Penstone Veterinary Clinic is very concerned about cars speeding from Dair House south on the A355. Mrs. Rolfe said this comment was interesting as only two cars were registered as speeding in the hour and a half Speedwatch operated on the A355. Mr. Milne asked whether the MVAS was still travelling around the Parish and suggested moving the MVAS to the Dair House location. There was a discussion about downloading the data that is recorded and the use/purpose of it. The Clerk was asked to circulate the instructions for councillors to volunteer.

David Banks also thanked those present for sorting out the parking on Green Lane and Hawthorn Lane. The Chairman said the Parish Council was there to hold people to account although it couldn't solve the problem itself. It was noted that the dangerous area may have been sorted but someone still insists on

parking inappropriately and the police are aware.

Cllr. Lewis advised a meeting was held earlier in the day about BC budgets but nothing could be discussed currently.