

FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 25 APRIL 2022 AT 7.30 P.M. AT FARNHAM ROYAL VILLAGE HALL

Present

Paul Rowley (Chair)	Marilyn Rolfe
Bob Milne	Richard Thomas
Jenny Quilter	Judith Hall (Clerk)
One member of the public	

The Chair declared the meeting open at 7.30pm. The meeting was adjourned for OPEN FORUM noted at the end of these minutes. The Chair reconvened the meeting.

22/33/PC Apologies for absence

David Moore and Jigar Trivedi

22/34/PC Declarations of Interest

None

22/35/PC To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 28 March 2022

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

22/36/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.

36.1 Update on Farnham Royal Broadband Issues – the content of the report was noted. Marilyn Rolfe advised that she will contact Swish Fibre and Buckinghamshire Council to look into the resident's additional funding queries. She will report back to the Parish Council.

36.2 Update on Buckinghamshire On Street Parking Review – the content of the report was noted. The Chairman advised that Cllr. Dhillon is taking forward comments from residents.

36.3 Update on Neighbourhood Plan – The Chairman advised that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is meeting regularly and has done good work. It had commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment and the draft report had been received. Following an initial review, the Chairman advised that the demographic data looked right for the Parish but the affordable housing element was based on national data which did not look right for the Parish. The Chairman shared that his objective is to make the villages affordable for youngsters, teachers, doctors and nurses etc. Richard Thomas queried how the Housing Needs Assessment was impacted by the 500m restriction zone around Burnham Beeches SAC. He continued that he is not sure where one new dwelling would go due to greenbelt protections. The Chairman continued that the Group has logged heritage assets and green assets such as woodlands and parks etc. and is looking at communicating the ideas to residents, business and organisations within the Parish. He noted that the consultation with businesses and organisations had already started, that a Facebook page had been set up and an update would be published in the next edition of the Farnhams Magazine. Marilyn Rolfe asked if any responses had been received from businesses and organisations. The Chairman confirmed that some responses had been received but not many so the Group is going to knock on doors to find out more from businesses and organisations. Finally, the Chairman advised that the Group was meeting with the consultants appointed to guide them through the process on 26 April 2022 and he and Marilyn Rolfe will be present to observe the discussion. Jenny Quilter suggested making information available at the Annual Parish Meeting next month. Bob Milne asked if there was a timeline for the consultation process and the Chairman advised that more would be known following the meeting with the consultants.

22/37/PC To receive a report from the Projects Working Group and consider any recommendations

37.1 Jenny quilter, Chair of the Projects Working Group, advised that the Group met on 22 April 2022 and prioritised the following projects for delivery in the current financial year (2022/23):

Review of Parish Office location
Demolition of the old Guide Hut

Playground next to Farnham Common Sports Club – Design and consultation phases
Review of Parish Council IT systems
Woodland Management Plan (including tree planting for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee)
Boundary Copse Improvements
Parish decorations for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee
Creating Wilder Verges (jointly with Buckinghamshire Council)
Website updates and improvements

37.2 In addition, the following Community Initiatives were highlighted for investigation and if supported, delivery in the current financial year (2022/23):

Community litter picking
Relaunch of Community Speedwatch
Carols at the Dell 2022

37.3 The Chairman advised that he had argued for a short project list to enable the Parish Council to be more focused.

Jenny Quilter advised that it was hoped that posters with information on each of the projects and initiatives would be displayed at the Annual Parish Meeting next month. It was suggested that it may also be possible to have some form of voting system for residents to record their views on suggested projects.

22/38/PC To consider the principle of obtaining a restrictive covenant to protect the land at Farnham Common Sports Club

The Chairman asked parish councillors whether they would support including all land leased to Farnham Common Sports Club, occupied by the playground and occupied by the Guide Hut. This **was agreed**. Bob Milne asked what the purpose of the covenant was. The Chairman advised that he was looking to protect the area from the possibility of future development. Jenny Quilter expressed that the area was a great green asset that should be protected. Bob Milne asked why the restrictive covenant was being suggested now especially as there was no provision in the budget for associated costs. He felt it didn’t necessarily need to be done now. Richard Thomas felt it was because he had raised it with the Chairman in order to protect a community asset and to ensure that the land is always used for sports and/or recreation. It was noted that there is currently a covenant on approximately half of the land but that there was concern as to whether this would protect the land if challenged. It was discussed that the current question was whether the Chairman and Clerk could approach solicitors for initial advice and quotes to be brought back to the Parish Council for further discussion. Marilyn Rolfe expressed that she felt seeking a restrictive covenant to protect the land would be a responsible action. The proposal **was agreed**. Bob Milne advised that he would like to understand the covenant that is currently registered and what the benefits are of obtaining a new covenant at this time.

22/38/PC To consider the revised Councillor Expenses Policy

The revised policy **was agreed**.

22/39/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.

39.1 To receive a report from the Finance Committee

39.1.1 The content of the report was noted and the Clerk advised that at Bob Milne’s request she had recirculated the agreed 2022/23 budget and 2023/24 projection as there had been an error in the 2023/24 brought forward figure stated in the original document. It was noted that it is now not expected that the Parish Council will reach the recommended level of reserves by the end of 2023/24.

39.1.2 In addition, the Clerk advised that Bob Milne had prepared a further document which included a projection for 2024/25. This had also been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk noted that the expenditure in the new projection had not been discussed or agreed and was likely to change on review. Bob Milne agreed with this and added that the new projection shows that it is not expected that the Parish Council will reach the recommended level of reserves by the end of 2024/25 either so he felt new projects, which have a cost to the Parish Council, should not be considered as it is anticipated that there will be annual deficits for the next few years.

39.1.3 It was noted that the last meeting of the Finance Committee had not taken place as it was not quorate. It was felt that moving the time of the meeting to the evening might increase attendance but reverting to holding the meeting just prior to parish council meetings was not thought practical as it would limit time available for important discussions and cause those evenings to be too long adversely affecting concentration. Richard Thomas felt that with all the working groups now in place and the resultant meetings, the time commitment was much greater than initially advised to potential councillors who are volunteers. Bob Milne raised a suggestion made by the Chairman to possibly reduce the number of Parish Council meetings to accommodate the Finance Committee and the working group meetings as councillors who work would be more likely to attend evening meetings. It **was agreed** that the Chairman and Clerk

would look at this and report back to the Parish Council with a proposal.

39.2 To consider the 2021/22 Annual Management Accounts

The Chairman, 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. The Chairman asked whether any councillor had any comments or questions and those present confirmed not. The management accounts **were agreed**.

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

The Chairman confirmed that he had carried out the random checks required under the Finance Regulations. He also noted that the cost of electricity for the streetlights had doubled this month. The payments and receipts, as per the cashbook, **were agreed**.

39.4 To consider quotes for replacement flagpoles

It **was agreed** that Company A, Flagmakers, would be appointed to supply and install the replacement flagpoles as soon as possible and ideally before the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration weekend.

22/40/PC Planning:

40.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

Marilyn Rolfe drew particular attention to the following applications:

40.1.1 PL/21/3991/FA Caldicott Trust Ltd, Caldicott Boys Preparatory School, Crown Lane, Farnham Royal seeks to demolish the existing sports pavilion and erect a new one. It was noted that the plans had been amended to reflect comments previously submitted regarding the size of the proposed building and that although the site is on greenbelt land, Natural England had no objection to the proposal.

40.1.2 PL/22/0651/FA Land at Cobblers Close, Farnham Royal seeks to erect six new dwellings in two rows of three terraced houses. Marilyn Rolfe advised that she was concerned about overdevelopment of the site and the likely additional traffic movements in and out of the site but noted that Highways had no objection to the proposal.

40.1.3 Marilyn Rolfe advised that there had been no Buckinghamshire Council Planning Committee meetings in March and April 2022 and that the next one is scheduled for May 2022.

40.1.4 The planning comments on the circulated schedule **were ratified**

40.2 To note recent planning decisions

Marilyn Rolfe drew particular attention to the following decisions:

40.2.1 PL/21/4665/FA Land East Of Cut Heath House Parsonage Lane Farnham Common seeks to erect seven residential detached dwellings. It was noted that the application was refused by Buckinghamshire Council. Marilyn Rolfe supported this decision as this application was for dwellings in addition to those previously agreed on the site that was originally one property, borders ancient woodland and is partially on greenbelt land.

40.2.2 The planning decisions on the circulated schedule **were noted**.

22/41/PC Any Other Business (for information only)

41.1 Bob Milne advised that he was concerned about work proposed on an oak tree, subject to a tree protection order, on one of the planning applications he had reviewed, PL/22/0982/TP Land at Cranwells Lane, Farnham Common, and wanted to ensure that the Clerk had received his comment for submission to the Planning Team at Buckinghamshire Council. The Clerk confirmed she had.

41.2 Richard Thomas advised that trees in Brockenhurst Wood, which borders Ingrams Copse, have been chopped down creating quite a clearing. He asked the Clerk to find out whether there are any restrictions protecting the trees and suggested asking the arboriculturist appointed by the Parish Council. The Clerk advised that she would review this with him and the Tree Officer at Buckinghamshire Council.

41.3 Marilyn Rolfe asked the clerk when the remains of the fallen trees on Beaconsfield Road (A355) were going to be removed by Buckinghamshire Council. Concern was raised about the safety of pedestrians and road users. The Clerk advised that she would need to take photographs and report the issues to Buckinghamshire Council requesting action.

41.4 Marilyn Rolfe advised that there had been reports of several overgrown hedges on Mayflower Way and asked whether parish councillors who live in the area would have a look and take photographs. The Clerk advised that since handing back devolved services to Buckinghamshire Council, the parish council no longer had a role in this issue other than to direct concerned residents to report the issues on Buckinghamshire Council's Fix My Street service and noted that this was one of the updates that needed to be made to the website. She was hoping that there would be a page with all the reporting information and links for residents. It was suggested that this should be a priority.

41.5 Marilyn Rolfe asked the Clerk whether the locations of all of the defibrillators in the Parish were known to her and listed on the website. The Clerk advised that she knew the location of some units but that there was no list on the website. She also added that when a defibrillator is needed the user should ring 999 and then the operators will be able to direct users to the nearest unit and will provide the access code to open the relevant external cabinet.

22/42/PC Next meeting

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

The next meeting will be: Annual Meeting - 23 May 2022 at 6.30pm

Annual Parish Meeting - 23 May 2022 at 8.00pm

Both meetings will be held at Farnham Common Village Hall

Open Forum

Ruth Stevens, a resident in Farnham Royal advised that during the February 2022 storms a tree had fallen from Goose Green, which is managed by L&Q. As a result, the roof of a garage on Goose Green had been damaged. She understood that the roof was made of asbestos and felt that something needed to be done to make it safe. The Chairman advised that Jerry Houdret had notified him of the incident and that Jerry Houdret had reported it to L&Q but nothing had yet been done. The Chairman stated that he had advised Jerry Houdret to ring the Environmental Health Team at Buckinghamshire Council and that Ruth Stevens and the Clerk should also ring them to report the incident.