

## Information for the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting on 23 January 2023

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

#### 3.1 Update on projects with Beeches Community Board

##### 3.1.1 Festive Fun & Carols

This community event was held on 10 December 2022 in the grounds of St John's Church.

Despite the extremely cold temperature, the event saw the community come together to sing a collection of traditional carols and modern festive songs and we were thrilled to be joined by choirs from Farnham Common Infant School, Farnham Common Junior School and St Mary's Farnham Royal Primary School who enthusiastically performed some of their favourites. Mulled wine, mince pies, flavoured coffees and chilli were available to provide some warmth and there was a Christmas Market showcasing many products and services from small local businesses. Santa even found time to join us taking up residence in his grotto where he and his elves met many of the local children. Many of those who visited also enjoyed playing in the 'snow' with snowman inside the giant snow globe.

The Parish Council would like to thank: Beeches Community Board, Burnham Beeches Rotary, Farnham Common Infant School, Farnham Common Junior School, St Mary's Farnham Royal Primary School, The Farnhams Community Facebook Group, The United Benefice of Farnham Royal and Hedgerley and of course, Santa and his elves.

The Parochial Church Council Of The Ecclesiastical Parish Of Farnham Royal Buckinghamshire have agreed to donate £250 towards the cost of the children's gifts and the Clerk has issued the relevant invoice.

The Beeches Community Board agreed to donate funds equal to half of the costs of the event and as such a payment of £1,864.72 has been received.

##### 3.1.2 Blackpond Lane Footway Extension

Construction of the long awaited footway extension in Blackpond Lane has started and should be completed by the middle of February. The extension will provide a continuous footway to Southmead Surgery. This is a joint project between the Parish Council and the Beeches Community Board. The cost is over £100,000 but this investment will greatly improve the lives of local residents walking to the surgery, the shops and amenities along The Broadway and the village schools.

The Parish Council would like to thank local residents for their patience during the construction phase.

#### 3.2 Update on The Queen's Green Canopy

You may recall that the Parish Council was keen for the parish to participate in The Queen's Green Canopy. Just before Christmas the Clerk, Bob Milne, Tony Birkett and Clive Robinson were joined in Temple Dell by the Eco-Committee of Farnham Common Junior School who worked together to plant 30 trees. The Parish Council's arboriculturist, Peter Harding of Pyramid Consulting was also in attendance to provide his advice.

The Parish Council would like to thank everyone who took part.

#### 3.3 Extra-ordinary Meeting to review the Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan is progressing and a draft plan containing details of some of the potential policies has been prepared. Currently the Steering Group is working on the following:

- The Neighbourhood Plan Facebook page will go live on Friday 27 January 2023
- The Neighbourhood Plan pages on the parish council website will go live on Friday 10 February 2023
- The Informal Consultation Questionnaire for residents will go live on Friday 3 March 2023. The questionnaire will remain open until 28 April 2023.

Stephen Stagg of the Steering Group and Leani Haim and Matthew Jennings of Oneill Homer (the consultants) met with the Planning Working Group just before Christmas to outline the draft policies and it will be necessary for the Parish Council to discuss these in detail. Given the importance of these discussions, it is thought sensible for the Chair to summon an extra-ordinary meeting of the parish council to enable them to take place.

#### 3.4 Update on King Charles III's Coronation

A verbal update will be given at the meeting to enable to discussion regarding possible options.

### **4 To consider the appointment of contractors to demolish the Guide Hut**

The Clerk has received two quotes for demolishing the Guide Hut in Farnham Common and associated works. These quotes have been forwarded to councillors separately.

A third quote is expected prior to the parish council meeting and this will be circulated upon receipt.

### **5 To receive report from Clive Robinson regarding dropped kerbs in the Parish**

As a result of correspondence sent to the Clerk by a concerned resident, Clive Robinson has surveyed all dropped curbs / junctions in the Parish, excluding drop curbs where there is no hard pathway or at entrances to private property - residential, farming or business - as these are not covered under the law.

His report and recommendations have been sent to councillors separately.

### **6 To consider the following Speeding Projects**

#### 6.1 The purchase of a new Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (with or without maintenance)

Speeding vehicles in the parish is a constant cause of concern for residents and parish councillors alike. A MVAS travels around the parish and alerts drivers who are travelling above the speed limit. This is both a deterrent and a way of gathering data for the parish. A quote for a new MVAS has been provided by SWARCO. A copy of the quote has been circulated to councillors separately.

#### 6.2 The purchase of a training package for the effective use of the above sign

A new sign would enable the data to be downloaded, reported to the community and used to support any future applications for funding for traffic calming schemes. In order to learn how to download the data, the parish council needs to purchase a training package. A quote has been provided by SWARCO. A copy of the quote has been circulated to councillors separately.

#### 6.3 The purchase of a handheld RADAR gun and hi vis vests for Speedwatch

The parish currently shares Speedwatch equipment with other local parishes. Thames Valley Police recently recommended that each group/village/team purchase their own equipment to allow flexibility so that the teams can undertake activities as and when they see fit. Taking away the potential scenario that equipment is not available.

Thames Valley Police also advised that they now support the use of hand held devices due to the cost implications of static devices, which were impeding smaller communities from being able to use the scheme.

Thames Valley Police stress that only non Home Office approved devices can be used for example a Bushnell 101911 radar gun. The likes of Laser LTI 20/20 and SPEEDAR devices are NOT to be used within the scheme. The use of a device called pocket radar will also not be sanctioned due to the increased ability of operators to misuse the equipment.

A Bushnell 101911 radar gun and batteries is currently available on Amazon for £205.03 including VAT. It would also be advisable to purchase hi vis vest. Ones printed with Community Speedwatch cost approximately £5.00 each plus VAT.

### **7 To consider updates to the Parish Council's website to improve communication**

#### 7.1 Neighbourhood Plan Pages

As mentioned above, the plan is that shortly two pages will be added to the Parish Council website. One will provide details regarding the process and the other will be home to the informal consultation questionnaire. The cost of creating these pages will be settled from the Neighbourhood Plan grant that has been obtained.

## 7.2 Parish Projects Page

It has also been suggested that a Projects page is added to the website to better communicate the projects undertaken by the parish council and the rationale for not taking projects forward. The estimated cost of creating this page will be £120-150.

## 8 **To consider relocating the Farnham Pump painting to Farnham Royal**

When the current clerk took up her position there was a larger painting in the corner of the office that refers to The Farnham Pump. For the last four years the painting has remained in the corner and it is such a shame. The painting is a large, heavy object and it has been suggested that it should be sited in Farnham Royal.

## 9 **To consider items relating to the relocation of the Parish Council's office**

### 9.1 Extra-ordinary meeting to consider: dilapidations, lease, telephone services contract, removal costs and clearance costs

It is anticipated that the new lease will commence on 1 March 2023. It will be necessary to have an extra-ordinary meeting of the parish council to consider the terms of the lease and various other matters prior to this date. Solicitors have been instructed by both parties and I am awaiting further progress before asking the Chairman to summon the meeting.

### 9.2 Permission to dispose of surplus office furniture and equipment

As previously discussed, some of the office furniture and equipment in the Parish Office has not been used for several years. As such permission is being sought to dispose of certain items. This is likely to be one office computer, one monitor, one office desk, three metal filing cabinets, one small metal set of drawers, one small wooden cabinet, one vacuum cleaner and various chairs. The total value of these items on the asset register is £86.

## 10 **Finance:**

### 10.1 Expenditure Decisions

#### 10.1.1 To set up a new direct debit for the streetlight electricity supply

The Clerk has received confirmation that the new group supply arrangement with Buckinghamshire Council started on 1 October 2022 and will last for one year. It is therefore necessary to set up a new variable direct debit to settle the monthly cost. In accordance with clause 6.7 of the Finance Regulations, any mandate must be signed by two parish councillors and the approval of the use of a variable direct debit must be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

#### 10.1.2 To consider replacing the glass panel at the One Pin Lane bus shelter

As previously reported to parish councillors, the contractor has reported that one of the panes of glass in the bus shelter on the A355 near One Pin Lane has been broken again. A picture is below. Councillors may recall that the contractor has only just replaced two of the panels.



Essentially there are three replacement options:

1. Replace with laminated glass - £180  
(this is what's currently in place)

OR

2. Replace with UV resistant polycarbonate - £180

OR

3. Replace with 9mm plywood panel decorated to match existing - £150

#### 10.1.3 To consider tree work required at Ingrams Copse

As previously reported to parish councillors, the Clerk was advised by the owner of a property neighbouring Ingrams Copse that two trunks of a three trunk tree have fallen onto his land and that the third trunk is in danger of falling as well. No serious damage has been caused but all three trunks need to be dealt with. Capability Landscapes Ltd., the maintenance contractor, advised that they are unable to complete the required work so the Clerk asked South Bucks Tree Surgeons Limited to provide a quote, which was £2,600. At the October 2022 parish council meeting the Clerk was asked to obtain another quote. The Clerk approached Clarke's Gardening Services who have provided a quote of £750 plus VAT.

#### 10.1.4 To consider tree work at Farnham Common Sports Club requested by the school

The Clerk was contacted by the School Business Manager at Farnham Common Junior School following their latest arboriculture report. The report advises that two trees in the grounds of the sports club require work. The details are:

G01 Mixed species, multi stem tree with major deadwood in the crown

T011 Sycamore tree with major deadwood in the crown

It is recommended that both trees have deadwood in the crown removed within three months.

The Business Manager has obtained the following quotes for dealing with both trees:

South Bucks Tree Surgeons Limited - £510

Firewood & Chip Arboricultural Services Ltd - £285

It should be noted that the cost of dealing with the multi stem tree will be shared with the school as only one stem is within the grounds of the sports club. The Business Manager has acknowledged this so the costs will be lower than stated above.

The Clerk asked the parish council's arboriculturist for his opinion and he advised that he 'struggled to see any significant deadwood on either tree.' He also stated, 'I suppose the bottom line is that if the school have been advised to remove deadwood from these trees they need to get it done.'

#### 10.1.5 To consider payment of the excess daily rate of the Neighbourhood Plan consultant

On 1 April 2022 Oneill Homer, the Neighbourhood Planning Consultant appointed by the Parish Council, increased its daily rate from £550 to £650. The grant funding obtained to pay the costs of preparing our Neighbourhood Plan caps the daily rate for consultants at £550. The Parish Council is therefore being asked to fund £100 per day. It is estimated that the total cost will be £1,500 (15 days).

#### 10.1.6 To consider the purchase of a laptop docking station

Since moving to a cloud based system, the Clerk's computer is struggling to operate all of the new programmes especially if more than one are open at the same time, for instance Outlook and Zoom. It has therefore been suggested that a docking station is purchased to enable the refurbished laptop purchased in March 2022, which is a better specification, to be used as a desktop computer by the Clerk.

A quote has been obtained from the current IT maintenance provider for the station and installation. A copy of the quote has been forwarded to councillors separately.

If the purchase is approved permission to dispose of the computer, which is currently in the asset register for £350 being the purchase price in 2019, will be sought.

#### 10.1.7 To ratify payments and note receipts, as per the November 2022 cashbook

The cashbook was reviewed and approved by the Chair of the Finance Committee prior to the payments contained in it being made. The cashbook must now be formally ratified.

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#### 10.1.9 To consider payments and note receipts, as per the January 2023 cashbook

The cashbook has been reviewed and approved by Paul Rowley, as Interim Chair of the Finance Committee and has been circulated to councillors separately.

## 10.2 Finance Committee Recommendations

### 10.2.1 To consider the appointment of Katherine Damsell to Finance Committee

It is for the Parish Council to appoint the members of the Finance Committee. Katherine Damsell has expressed a willingness to join the committee.

If the appointment is approved, the current members of the committee have requested that Katherine Damsell is appointed Chair of the committee and she has agreed. Her appointment as Chair will be confirmed at the next committee meeting.

### 10.2.2 To consider the December 2022 Management Accounts

The December 2022 Management Accounts have been circulated to councillors separately.

### 10.2.3 To consider allocating the 2022/23 CIL receipts to the Blackpond Lane Footway project

The Clerk advised that two CIL receipts had been received in the sum of £3,595.50 in respect of application PL/19/3705/FA concerning Land Adjacent to Chandos Lodge, 97 Blackpond Lane, Farnham Royal and in the sum of £7,804.36 in respect of application PL/20/3933/FA concerning Berkeley House, Farnham Lane, Farnham Royal. Funds received now totalled £11,399.86.

The CIL Team at Buckinghamshire Council have advised that they are not able to advise on the appropriateness of projects or make decisions/recommendations on the use of the funds. They did however provide a link to some guidance (<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/cil-guidance-for-parish-and-town-councils/>). The guidance states that the funds must be used to support the development of the local area by funding:

- the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure
- anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area

These spending powers allow the local community to decide what they need to help mitigate the impacts of development. If the funds are not spent within 5 years or have not been applied Buckinghamshire Council can ask for them to be repaid.

### 10.2.4 To consider the 2023/24 Budget

A copy of the 2023/24 budget as recommended by the Finance Committee has been circulated to councillors separately.

### 10.2.5 To consider the 2023/24 Precept

A copy of the 2023/24 precept recommendation by the Finance Committee has been circulated to councillors separately.

## 11 Planning:

### 11.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

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

### 11.2 To note recent planning decisions

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

### 11.3 Slough Borough Council's Wider Area Growth Study

The Clerk has previously circulated a copy of a Buckinghamshire Council presentation regarding the above study to all parish councillors. The Chair of the Planning Working Group is reviewing the study documents and this matter is on the agenda for the next meeting, which is on 3 February 2023.

### 11.4 Local Plan for Buckinghamshire Evidence Base – Settlement Review

Buckinghamshire Council is conducting a Settlement Review of all Towns and Parishes within the Council area. This review will form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan for Buckinghamshire and has been split into two parts - Part one: review of the services and facilities, and Part two: general feedback.

The Clerk has received a copy of the data sourced by Buckinghamshire Council for our Parish. We have been asked to review the data from their desk-based audit and confirm whether it is correct and make any adjustments.

The deadline for response is 28 February 2023.

This matter is on the agenda for the next meeting of the Planning Working Group, which is on 3 February 2023.