

## Information for the Parish Council Meeting on 30 October 2023

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

#### 3.1 Update from the Neighbourhood Policing Team

The Neighbourhood Policing Team will provide a written report for circulation.

#### 3.2 Update on meetings with Buckinghamshire Highways

The latest meeting with our Buckinghamshire Highways' Local Area Technician ("LAT") took place on 4 October 2023, progress is as follows:

#### Issue

Initially making safe the holes where bollards have been removed outside the public conveniences and along The Broadway and then installing appropriate replacements

#### Update

The remains of the bollards outside the public conveniences have been removed and the holes have been temporarily filled. Installing the replacement high impact bollards is on the work programme. The contractors are working through a backlog of priority works and this will be included in this.

The dip in the pavement in the entrance to the car park behind the Stag & Hounds on The Broadway

The LAT has advised that the dropped utility cover that is causing the dip is outside the maintainable Highway area and would technically be a private issue but he has sent another enquiry to Road Space Management to confirm this. Either way it will need the asset owner to address the dropped cover.

Grass cutting inc. the verges generally, additional verges handed back this financial year, Kingsway Green, the corner of Rectory Close and paying special attention to junctions on A355

Ongoing

Felling of mature trees on public land

The LAT has advised that Buckinghamshire Highways now has a Green Asset Enforcement Officer who may be able to provide some further advice.

Potential to move the 50MPH on Collinswood Road further north and other traffic management options for A355 inc. the new MVAS being purchased by the parish council

Ongoing

The flooding in the dip between the Beaconsfield Services and Farnham Common, which causes traffic to back up into the village.

Ongoing - involves liaising with the LAT from another area.

Phasing of traffic lights at One Pin Lane junction following issues on 10/11 June 2023

Done - this was a one off issue that was resolved at the time.

Giving extra time for mobility vehicles at the crossing outside Sainsbury's and Tesco on The Broadway

This has been reported to the Traffic Signals Engineer at the contractors appointed by Buckinghamshire Highways.

The missing 'School 20 when lights show' plates on the flashing light assemblies outside Farnham Common Infant School

The Highways Community Liaison Manager investigated this matter with the team that originally implemented this scheme. The supplementary 20mph plates were originally approved to be

implemented however, a Buckinghamshire Council decision on 20mph speed limits was implemented and the removal of these within sites in Buckinghamshire took place. At present the 20mph signage is therefore not supported.

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| Dropped kerbs and pavement repairs, particularly the one on Beaconsfield Road near Spring Lane.  | Ongoing   |
| Removal and replacement of the barrier at the entrance to the footpath from Beaconsfield Road to Farnham Common Sports Club to improve access for buggies and mobility vehicles. | Done  |
| Collection of rubbish in the vegetation by the bus stop on Beaconsfield Road near Old Beaconsfield Road and the possible addition of a bin.                                      | The LAT advised that the Waste Team are requesting that Highways clear the vegetation to enable better access for the litter pickers.   |
| Replacement of the bollards along The Broadway recently knocked down by a passing vehicle.   | Done  |
| The cutting back of tree branches from within the private property boundary that are blocking a streetlight on Mayflower Way.  | The LAT wrote to the homeowner and the homeowner has removed the branches.  |
| Repair or replace the road name sign at the junction of Mayflower Way off Templewood Lane.   | Ongoing   |
| Removal of overgrown vegetation making walking along Purton Lane dangerous.  | The LAT has advised that this has been added to the programme of works.   |
| Removal of overgrown vegetation at the Eastern end of Farnham Park Lane and when turning in from Beaconsfield Road (north)   | The LAT has advised that this has been added to the programme of works.   |
| Removal of a large broken branch which is hanging in the trees above the bus shelter on Beaconsfield Road by the junction with Farnham Park Lane.                                | Done  |
| A resident's complaint about the condition of the pavement between Elm Close and Forge Drive following a fall.   | Ongoing   |
| Fallen tree / stump on A355 near Devonshire Green, Farnham Royal   | The LAT has chased this up with the contractor. The contractor has advised they have been to the site twice to attempt the removal but due to conflicting traffic management they were unable to do the works. They will try again. |
| The cutting back of tree branches from within a private property boundary that are blocking a streetlight on Blackpond Lane.   | The LAT has confirmed a letter has been sent to the homeowner.  |
| The cutting back of tree branches from within a private property boundary that are blocking a street sign on Mayflower Way.  | The LAT is investigating where the tree branches are coming from.   |
| The cutting back of vegetation from within a private property boundary on Long Close.  | The LAT has confirmed a letter has been sent to the homeowner.  |
| The cutting back of vegetation from within a private property boundary on Kingsway.  | The LAT has confirmed a letter has been sent to the homeowner.  |

Double Yellow Lines following previous consultation

The double yellow lines for Hawthorn Lane, Green Lane and Kingsway have been confirmed by Buckinghamshire Highways and they have advised that they should be installed shortly after 4 November 2023, subject to weather.

Residents are encouraged to report all Highways issues, as they arise, on <https://fixmystreet.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/>. If you consider the issue to be dangerous or an emergency, please call Buckinghamshire Highways on 0300 131 6000.

### 3.3 Update on Annual Playground Inspections

At the September meeting, Jenny Quilter advised that the basket swing and the flat swings in Farnham Park Playing Fields should be closed until the required remedial work had been carried out. The Clerk advised that the basket swing had been removed whilst the supplier was arranging a new timber to replace the rotten one, so this element was closed. This remains the case as the supplier has not yet replaced the timber under the warranty. With regard to the flat swing, the Clerk advised that the worn shackles and bushes had been replaced. The seats on the flat swings have now also both been replaced so these swings are therefore open. In addition, the annual report noted that a part was missing from the gyrospiral. After contacting the manufacturer, it transpired that the part is a support bracket so a replacement has been ordered.

With regard to the playground at Farnham Common Sports Club, Jenny Quilter and the Clerk visited the site and recommended that the seat on one of the flat swings was replaced. This has been done. In addition, it was reported that there are timbers on the multiply unit that are significantly degraded, which create a trip hazard when using the equipment to access the slide. They do not appear to be elements that could easily be repaired ahead of the planned renewal, so it was recommended that these areas are closed off (with hazard tape) to stop access. All parish councillors that replied, being a majority, agreed with this recommendation so the multiply unit has been closed.

### 3.4 Update on Neighbourhood Plan

The grant application was approved and the requested funds have been received. The Steering Group will now move ahead with finalising the plans for the Formal Consultation including the printing of a bitesize version of the Draft Plan for delivery to every household in the parish. There will also be banners and posters in the parish to publicise the consultation and all documents will be uploaded on the parish council website.

It is anticipated that the Formal Consultation will commence in early November and will run until the middle of December 2023.

### 3.5 Update on Community Speedwatch

Two councillors and two volunteers are fully trained with another councillor and volunteer partially trained. Each session must be attended by three operators so the group would like to encourage more residents to volunteer.

The Group has now carried out Speedwatch sessions at all the current locations in the parish: Beaconsfield Road (outside Dair House School), Collinswood Road (outside Millward House Day Nursery), One Pin Lane, Stewarts Drive, Farnham Lane, Crown Lane, Park Road, Templewood Lane and Mayflower Way. Some of the site locations need to be changed slightly and the Clerk is working on this with the Police Co-ordinator. Requests have also been received for sites in Beeches Road and Christmas Lane, which will be put to the Police Co-ordinator.

Since the activity started, the Group has recorded 15 motorists who were found to be traveling over the prescribed speed threshold and these have been reported on the Community Speedwatch system. The maximum speed recorded is 41mph on a 30mph road and the average speed recorded is 38mph on a 30mph road.

The Group aims to undertake activity at two sites per week. So far, feedback has been generally positive but last week the team were abused by a driver and were abused and threatened by a pedestrian. This behaviour is disappointing and unacceptable and has been reported in line with the Scheme's policies.

### 3.6 Update on Freedom of Information Act request

On 26 September 2023, I received a request for a copy of the Housing Needs Assessment that was prepared as part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

At the Planning Working Group meeting on 29 September 2023, it was decided that the Assessment would

not be provided.

On 4 October 2023, I advised the requesting party that the Assessment would not be released.

Subsequently, on 4 October 2023 I received a Freedom of Information Act ("FOI") request for a copy of the Assessment.

Following receipt of the request I contacted Breakthrough Communications via Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils for advice about releasing the Assessment now a FOI request had been received. The Parish Council has 20 working days (from the first working day after the request is received) to reply so a reply must be provided on or before 1 November 2023.

On 23 October 2023, the Clerk received advice which confirmed that the Assessment should be released unless the author has a compelling reason, with evidence, as to why their commercial interest will be harmed if the document is released. The Clerk was advised to contact the author with this question.

### 3.7 Update on 'Meet Your Local Councillors'

The second session is being held at 10am on Saturday 4 November in Farnham Common Community Library. Paul Rowley will be attending the session on behalf of the Parish Council. All councillors are welcome to join him.

### 3.8 Update on personal injury claim received

As advised at the September meeting, a personal injury claim has been received following an accident at the playground at Farnham Park Playing Fields. All documentation has been passed to the insurers and they are dealing directly with the solicitors appointed by the claimant.

### 3.9 Confirmation of representation at Remembrance Events

There are three remembrance activities for the Parish Council. The first is to place posies on the war graves in St Mary's Churchyard. This will be done by Paul Rowley or Bob Milne. The second is to lay a wreath at the Remembrance event on Kingsway Green on Saturday 11 November 2023. This will be done by Marilyn Rolfe as Vice Chair. The third is to lay a wreath at the war memorial in Farnham Royal and attend the Remembrance Service at St Mary's Church on Sunday 12 November 2023. This will be done by Paul Rowley, as Chairman.

## 4 **Claims received from and on behalf of Cllr. Clive Robinson**

### 4.1 To ratify the appointment of BP Collins

Following the September 2023 meeting it was informally agreed that the Parish Council would appoint BP Collins to provide advice and respond to the letter received from Wellers Reece-Jones. A suggested budget was provided and this has been circulated to all councillors, except Cllr. Clive Robinson, in line with advice received.

### 4.2 To consider granting delegated powers to respond to correspondence

Following discussions amongst some councillors, it is proposed that delegated powers are granted to Katherine Damsell, Tony Birkett and the Clerk to progress this matter to a close with the following conditions:

1. They act in accordance with advice received from BP Collins.
2. Any action taken under this arrangement must be reported at the next parish council meeting.
3. Costs are limited to the agreed budget, with any increase being considered at a parish council meeting.

## 5 **To consider feedback on first Farmers Market**

There will be a discussion at the meeting, with feedback being provided by David Moore, Paul Rowley and Tony Birkett.

## 6 **Contracts:**

### 6.1 Update on new office lease

It is hoped that the lease will complete on 30 October 2023 but the Clerk is awaiting confirmation and will provide a verbal report at the meeting.

### 6.2 Update on contracts and tenders

Draft contracts have been issued for the maintenance of St Mary's Churchyard and the maintenance of woodlands & grasslands. Both contracts are with Amersham Town Council and their feedback is expected shortly.

The tender documents for the maintenance of several items (Playground at Farnham Park Playing Fields, Bus Shelters, Outdoor Fitness Equipment, War Graves, Benches, Defibrillators, War Memorial, Noticeboards, Millenium Signs, Flagpoles) have been issued with responses required by the middle of November for consideration at the November parish council meeting.

### 6.3 Update on List of Assets and Performance Management Template (Draft)

The Parish Council recognises the importance of performance management in improving standards and ensuring value for money in respect of its various maintenance contracts.

Katherine Damsell and the Clerk have reviewed all of the Parish Council's assets and responsibilities and have prepared a detailed list, so all relevant information is held in one master document. In addition, they have started to prepare checklists to enable reviewing councillors to check compliance with the agreed maintenance work and document any comments and actions identified. These draft documents will be available at the meeting for review and discussion.

## **7 Projects (continued from September 2023 Meeting):**

### 7.1 Boundary Copse, Farnham Royal

The purpose of this project is to carry out some remedial work to the boundary wall and create a more open space to discourage fly tipping and antisocial behaviour. This will provide a more inviting area for residents and visitors to enjoy. The erection of a fence and gates to secure the site has also been discussed.

Quotes were obtained via the landowner, Buckinghamshire Council and were sent to parish councillors in January 2023.

Subsequently, Bob Milne and the Clerk met an officer from Buckinghamshire Council and their chosen contractor at the copse and have been waiting for update costings. It now transpires that updated costs were sent to Buckinghamshire Council in May 2023 but despite repeatedly chasing these were only forward to the Clerk last week. It is therefore necessary to confirm with the contractor directly that these prices are still valid.

With regard to creating a more open space, the Clerk has received two quotes but these are significantly different so a meeting is being arranged with the Parish Council's appointed arboriculturist, who is also preparing the Woodland Management Plan, to draw up a detailed scope that can be sent to both potential contractors for final quotes. Bob Milne and the Clerk are meeting the arboriculturist on 1 November 2023 to agree the scope.

In the meantime, some of the residents in Bishops Orchard have complained about the vegetation along the boundary of the copse. They have complained about the weeds coming through and over the fence and the condition and height of the trees and have requested the creation of a fire break. These issues will also be discussed with the arboriculturist on 1 November 2023.

### 7.2 Playgrounds

Jenny Quilter, Paul Rowley and the Clerk met with the Contracts Manager on site on 5 October 2023 to talk through the project, identify any risks and discuss construction methods. The Contracts Manager has recently sent through the pre start notes and Risk Assessment Method Statement for review. He has also advised that construction is due to start week commencing 6 November 2023.

### 7.3 To consider holding a community event in Spring 2024

Parish Councillors are being asked to consider whether they would still like to hold this event and if so, what they would like included so that investigations can take place before the 2024/25 budget discussions take place next month.

### 7.4 To consider how to mark the Parish Council's 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Parish Councillors are being asked to consider whether they would still like to mark the anniversary and if so, what they would like this to be so that investigations can take place before the 2024/25 budget discussions take place next month.

### 7.5 To consider how to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings (D-Day 80)

All town and parish councils have been contacted by Bruno Peek CVO OBE OPR Pageantmaster, encouraging them to take part in D-Day 80 on 6th June next year by lighting a Beacon. A copy of the letter has been forwarded to parish councillors separately.

## **8 To consider potential new policies:**

### **8.1 Commemorative Acts**

A copy of the draft policy has been forwarded to parish councillors separately.

### **8.2 Community Noticeboard**

A copy of this draft policy in respect of the community noticeboard on the wall of the public conveniences in The Broadway car park has been forwarded to parish councillors separately.

### **8.3 Correspondence List**

This policy has been suggested by Cllr. Clive Robinson.

### **8.4 Memorials for current or past Councillors or Officials**

This policy has been suggested by Cllr. Clive Robinson.

### **8.5 Green Belt**

This policy has been suggested by Cllr. Clive Robinson.

## **9 Finance:**

### **9.1 To note the review of September 2023 bank reconciliation under paragraph 2.2 of Finance Regulations**

At the September 2023 meeting it was noted that at least once a quarter a councillor other than the Chair of the Finance Committee or a cheque signatory shall verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the Responsible Financial Officer. Jenny Quilter has carried out this review on the September 2023 bank reconciliations.

### **9.2 To consider the September 2023 Management Accounts**

A copy of the September 2023 Management Accounts has been forwarded to parish councillors separately.

### **9.3 To consider payments and note receipts, as per the October 2023 cashbook**

The cashbook has been reviewed and approved by Katherine Damsell, as Interim Chair of the Finance Committee and has been sent to councillors separately.

## **10 Planning:**

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

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

### **10.2 To note recent planning decisions**

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