

Information for the Parish Council Meeting on 25 September 2023

3 Chairman's statement regarding the decision to remove Cllr. Clive Robinson from leadership positions on the Parish Council (18/86.8/PC 25 June 2018)

The Parish Council meeting held on 25 June 2018, resolved to remove Cllr. Clive Robinson from leadership positions on the Council - namely as Signage Manager, as chair of the play area working group and as a representative on the Local Area Forum.

At the June 2023 Parish Council meeting, it was reported that the Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils had advised that a parish council does not have the power or authority to remove certain roles from a councillor pending the outcome of a complaint for breaching the Code of Conduct.

It was further reported that as such the decision taken on 25 June 2018 is not binding and the councillor is free to take up any roles in the Parish Council. For the avoidance of doubt, Cllr. Clive Robinson is free to take up any roles in the Parish Council.

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

4.1 Update on electricity supply

On 1 October 2022, the Parish Council entered into a 24 month group supply contract with Buckinghamshire Council for electricity for the streetlights. The agreement was that the supplier Drax Energy would invoice the Parish Council but this has not happened and Buckinghamshire Council have been paying for the electricity used. They will recharge the Parish Council but so far only one invoice, for November 2022, has been received and paid. Copies of the monthly invoices are being provided, upon request, to the Parish Council so they can be reflected in the quarterly management accounts.

4.2 Update on meetings with Buckinghamshire Highways

As previously reported, on 13 June 2023, the Clerk was joined by Tony Birkett and Cllr. Dev Dhillon at a meeting with the Highways Community Liaison Manager and the Local Area Technician covering our villages for Buckinghamshire Highways. The Group agreed to meet every eight weeks to discuss progress with these issues and to raise any new issues. Cllr. Dev Dhillon and the Local Area Technician will drive around the parish together before each meeting to review progress and identify any unknown issues.

Unfortunately, the meeting scheduled for 8 August 2023 was cancelled by Buckinghamshire Highways but the next meeting is confirmed for 4 October 2023.

The following points, some of which have been outstanding since before 2018, are being discussed:

- Initially making safe the holes where bollards have been removed outside the public conveniences and along The Broadway and then installing appropriate replacements
- The dip in the pavement in the entrance to the car park behind the Stag & Hounds on The Broadway
- 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
- Felling of mature trees on public land
- 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
- The flooding in the dip between the Beaconsfield Services and Farnham Common, which causes traffic to back up into the village
- Phasing of traffic lights at One Pin Lane junction following issues on 10/11 June 2023
- Giving extra time for mobility vehicles at the crossing outside Sainsbury's and Tesco on The Broadway
- The missing 'School 20 when lights show' plates on the flashing light assemblies outside Farnham Common Infant School
- Dropped kerbs and pavement repairs, particularly the one on the Beaconsfield Road near Spring Lane
- 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
- Collection of rubbish in the vegetation by the bus stop on Beaconsfield Road near Old Beaconsfield Road and the possible addition of a bin.

- Replacement of the bollards recently knocked down along The Broadway.
- The cutting back of tree branches from within the private property boundary that are blocking a streetlight on Mayflower Way.
- Repair or replace the road name sign at the junction of Mayflower Way off Templewood Lane.
- Removal of overgrown vegetation making walking along Purton Lane dangerous.
- Removal of overgrown vegetation at the Eastern end of Farnham Park Lane and when turning in from Beaconsfield Road (north)
- 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.
- A resident's request for Edgeminder posts to be installed on the verge opposite 10 Frensham Walk to prevent vehicles from parking there.
- A resident's complaint about the condition of the pavement between Elm Close and Forge Drive following a fall.

The following Rights of Way issues have been reported to the Rights of Way Team:

- Footpath 14 (Purton Lane to Beaconsfield Road) resident's complaint that the footpath is almost impassable due to encroaching vegetation.
- Footpath 19 (Home Meadow to Park Road) resident's complaint that the footpath is almost impassable due to encroaching vegetation.

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.

Residents are encouraged to report all Rights of Way issues, as they arise, on <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/environment/countryside-and-public-rights-of-way/public-rights-of-way/report-an-issue-with-a-public-footpath-bridleway-or-byway/>.

4.3 Update on Annual Playground Inspections

A copy of each inspection has been sent to councillors separately.

The inspections have been reviewed by Marilyn Rolfe and Jenny Quilter. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

4.4 Update on Neighbourhood Plan

The Draft Neighbourhood Plan has now been finalised and will be published for formal consultation shortly.

The Clerk has applied to draw down the balance of the available grant from Locality to settle the additional costs incurred in finalising the Draft Plan and publishing the Draft Plan for consultation. The Steering Group has decided to produce a bitesize version of the Draft Plan which will be delivered by Royal Mail to every household in the parish. There will also be banners and posters in the parish to publicise the consultation. All documents will be uploaded on the parish council website. The total estimated costs are £3,326. Once the application has been approved and the funds have been received the consultation should commence within a few of weeks.

4.5 Update on Community Board Meetings

Graham White, the Interim Manager of the Beeches Community Board, has confirmed that the next Beeches Community Board meeting is on 3 October 2023 at 6.00pm on MS TEAMS. The agenda is available at <https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=855&MId=18032&Ver=4>.

Graham White has also advised that sub group meetings will be arranged after the main meeting referred to above.

4.6 Update from the Neighbourhood Policing Team

The local Police Community Support Officer has advised that they will be attending the meeting to provide a verbal update.

5 Finance:

5.1 To note the External Auditor's Report

The External Audit has been completed and a copy of the report has been sent to councillors separately. The report states 'in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.' In addition, there were no matters to draw to the attention

of the Parish Council.

5.2 To note the publication of Notice of Conclusion of Audit

Now the External Audit has been completed it is necessary to publish a Notice of Conclusion of Audit before 30 September 2023. This Notice will be published on noticeboards and on the Parish Council website on Tuesday 26 September 2023 for a minimum of 14 days.

5.3 To consider repairs to the bus shelter near Kingsway Green

One of the glass panels has been broken. Progress Services, the maintenance contractor has quoted £345 to replace the panel with an 8mm tempered safety glass panel.

This is a glass bus shelter and the Clerk has been advised that replacing the broken panel with a Perspex (or equivalent) panel is not appropriate due to the way the panel is fitted.

5.4 To consider improvements to northern pedestrian access at Temple Dell

A request has been received from the Activities Manager at Signature Farnham Common for the area inside the kissing gate at the north of Temple Dell to be levelled off as it is difficult to manoeuvre wheelchairs in and out. Amersham Town Council, the maintenance contractor, has provided an estimate of no more than £200 to level off the ground with some Type 1 mixed with concrete.

It has been requested that this is carried out before Orchard Day on 30 September 2023.

5.5 To consider payments and note receipts, as per the September 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.

6 **Contracts:**

6.1 To note Insurance arrangements for 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024

On renewal for 2022/23, the Parish Council entered into a three year agreement with Hiscox. The policy has been renewed for 2023/24 being the second year of the agreement. A copy of the insurance documents have been sent to parish councillors separately.

6.2 Update on new office lease

As agreed, the lease has been signed by Paul Rowley and Katherine Damsell and Paul Rowley has also declared the Statutory Declaration that Sections 24 to 28 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 are not to apply to the lease. Both documents have been returned to the Parish Council solicitor and they are just waiting for confirmation from the landlord's solicitor, who is holding a copy signed by the village hall trustees, that the lease can be dated and completed.

6.2.1 To consider purchasing an external mailbox



It is proposed that to ensure confidential post is protected an external locked mailbox is purchased. The mailbox in the picture is priced at £63.99. The landlord has confirmed that the caretaker will install the mailbox.

6.2.2 To consider purchasing blinds to comply with insurance recommendations

Currently the office windows have curtains which on one window do not meet when they are closed. The insurers advised that when the office is unoccupied the windows should be covered to deter anyone from breaking in. It is proposed that thermal/energy saving roller blinds are purchased. The Clerk has obtained a quote for two blinds from Blinds2Go in the sum of £166.61. The landlord has confirmed that the caretaker will install the blinds.

7 **Planning:**

7.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

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

7.2 To note recent planning decisions

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

7.3 To note current enforcement issues

The schedule of current enforcement issues has been circulated to councillors.

7.4 To note recent appeal decisions

The schedule of recent appeal decisions has been circulated to councillors.

8 To further consider the street name for six dwellings on the fields to the west of Blackpond Lane and opposite Devonshire Green, Farnham Royal (Land at Cobblers Close, Farnham Royal)

At the Parish Council meeting held in July 2023, it was discussed that Buckinghamshire Council had received a request to provide a street name for six dwellings on the fields to the west of Blackpond Lane and opposite Devonshire Green, Farnham Royal and that the developer had suggested either Mullins Drive or Speights Drive, which were based on their client's personal historical family names associated with Bucks/South Bucks area.

At the meeting, the Parish Council resolved to suggest a name taken from the War Memorial in Farnham Royal. The Clerk advised Buckinghamshire Council of the decision and the developer has looked at the War Memorial and has suggested Berry Drive after The Hon. J D Berry who fell in World War II.

9 To consider request for a commemorative tree at Temple Dell

The Clerk and Marilyn Rolfe have received a request for a commemorative mulberry tree for David Banks in the Community Orchard at Temple Dell.

At the parish council meeting held on 27 September 2021 it was discussed that the Parish does not have the space to accommodate such requests and it would be preferable for an established tree to be adopted or for a donation to a community project both of which could be marked with a plaque. A draft policy was prepared for Commemorative Acts but this was not adopted as one councillor wished to propose amendments. A copy of the draft policy has been sent to parish councillor separately.

10 To consider request for Edgeminder posts on a verge in Frensham Walk, Farnham Common

The Clerk has been contacted by a resident who would like Edgeminder posts to be installed on the verge outside 10 Frensham Walk to prevent vehicles from parking on the verge. Whilst this would require the resident to apply to Buckinghamshire Council for the installation of the posts, they have been advised to contact the Parish Council in the first instance to see if there are any objections to the installation.

11 Projects:

Update on Parish Council projects

11.1 Traders' Association

A verbal update will be provided by Tony Birkett.

11.2 Residents' Association

A verbal update will be provided by Tony Birkett

11.3 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. A request has also been received for a site in Beeches Road, which will again be put to the Police Co-ordinator.

The Group is recording motorists who are found to be over the prescribed speed threshold and these are being reported on the Community Speedwatch system.

The Group aims to undertake one session per week and Tony Birkett is preparing a rota to cover the approved sites. So far, general feedback has been very positive.

11.4 Woodlands & Verges

11.4.1 Boundary Copse, Farnham Royal

The purpose of the 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 these have been sent to parish councillors separately. 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.

11.4.2 Woodland Management Plan

The Parish Council appointed Pyramid Consulting, the same company who conduct the annual arboriculture inspections, to help with the preparation of a Woodland Management Plan for Jubilee Copse, Ingrams Copse and Boundary Copse. The Clerk was required to register the land with the Rural Payments Agency, which has been done and Pyramid Consulting have applied for a Countryside Stewardship (CS) Woodland Management Plan Capital Grant of £1,500 to cover the costs of preparing the plan. The Rural Payments Agency took several months to reply and have this week replied with a query regarding the mapping which will be dealt with by Pyramid Consulting shortly.

11.5 Playgrounds

11.5.1 To ratify the informal decision to draw down the loan amount of £105,000

To progress this project as quickly as possible, the Clerk emailed all parish councillors on 4 September 2023 requesting confirmation that the PWLB loan could be drawn down. All parish councillors except one replied. All those that replied confirmed their agreement.

By way of an update, the funds have now been received less a fee of £36.75. It is proposed that the funds received (£104,963.25) are transferred to the Parish Council's deposit account until such time as payment must be made to the playground supplier. Payment is due on completion of the installation.

11.5.2 To ratify the informal decision to complete a direct debit mandate

To progress this project as quickly as possible, the Clerk emailed all parish councillors on 4 September 2023 requesting confirmation that a direct debit mandate (which was required by PWLB) could be completed. All parish councillors except one replied. All those that replied confirmed their agreement.

11.5.3 To ratify the informal decision to place the order for the replacement playground with Proludic

To progress this project as quickly as possible, the Clerk emailed all parish councillors on 4 September 2023 requesting confirmation that she could submit the written order for the replacement playground. All parish councillors except one replied. All those that replied confirmed their agreement.

By way of an update, the written order was submitted on 8 September 2023 and a pre start meeting has been arranged with the supplier for 5 October 2023. This is due to be attended by Marilyn Rolfe, Jenny Quilter, Bob Milne and the Clerk

11.6 Old Guide Hut

11.6.1 Update on blocked sewer pipe

As previously advised, a manhole cover at the site leaked due to a blocked sewer pipe. Thames Water attended the site twice but were unable to suck out the waste to carry out a full investigation as the equipment on the first van was not working and the second van did not have the required equipment fitted. The second team created a hole in the ground, which enabled them to confirm that the pipe had collapsed causing the blockage. They also advised that as the pipe serves only buildings on land owned by the Parish Council it was a private pipe so would need to be repaired privately, not by them.

As agreed, Clear Drains (UK) Limited attended the site on 18 August 2023 to suck out the drain ready for Shannon Construction to replace the pipe. The pipe has been replaced at no cost to the Parish Council. After the pipe had been replaced, in accordance with Shannon Construction's recommendation, Progress Services attended and ran several gallons of water through the pipe to clear out any debris.

On 15 September 2023 during a site visit, the Clerk noticed that the manhole was again leaking. In consultation with the Chairman, it was agreed that Clear Drains (UK) Limited would again be called out to clear the drain. After the drain had been pressure washed, a camera was put through the pipe and it became clear that there are several stones in the pipe. Clear Drains (UK) Limited recommend that the pipe is pressure washed upstream from the next manhole downstream to enable the stones to be removed.

The Clerk is currently trying to locate the next manhole cover, which is believed to be in Drew Meadow.

11.6.2 To ratify payment of £645 plus VAT to Clear Drains (UK) Ltd to suck out the blocked sewer pipe

At the July parish council meeting, a budget of £2,000 was agreed to settle the costs of sucking out the

blocked sewer pipe. The actual cost incurred was £645 plus VAT. This was invoiced on a proforma basis and was paid by bank transfer.

11.6.3 To ratify payment of £166 plus VAT to Clear Drains (UK) Ltd to pressure wash the blocked sewer pipe

Clear Drains (UK) Limited has raised an invoice in the sum of £166 plus VAT for pressure washing the drain on 15 September 2023. This invoice is included on the September 2023 cashbook.

11.6.4 To consider tidying up the site

It is proposed that the site is tidied up with some weedkilling, grass seeding, cutting back of boundary shrubs and some picnic benches overlooking the new playground. There has also been a request for a community noticeboard. The Clerk has asked Amersham Town Council and Progress Services for a quote for weedkilling, grass seeding and cutting back some of the boundary shrubs.



The table in the picture is an example.

It is a Pembridge Picnic Table from Glasdon. It has wheelchair access and is a sustainable seating solution with space for a single wheelchair or mobility scooter and six standard seating positions. The cost is £1,002.79.



The noticeboard in the picture is an example from Noticeboard Company.

In an A3 size the cost is £483.08.

In an A2 size the cost is £516.08.

Update on Community Board Projects

11.7 Update on Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign

After a very long wait the Community Board has issued Buckinghamshire Highways' new guidance on applying for a mobile vehicle activated sign. The guidance can be found at : <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-transport/buckinghamshire-highways-community-board-guidance-document/> and further information can be found at <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/community-and-safety/parish-town-and-boundary-information/devolved-services/parish-highways/> and [Request installation of an electronic road sign | Buckinghamshire Council](#).

New project ideas for consideration

11.8 To consider revitalising the Community Orchard

There have been reports from residents, councillors and Mark Frater that some of the trees in the Community Orchard have either been damaged or have not flourished. The Parish Council holds some ring-fenced reserves for the Orchard.

11.9 To consider the revised proposal for a Farmers Market

David Moore has put together a revised proposal with Coopers Markets for a Farmers Market in the car park at Farnham Common Infant school and will provide an update at the meeting.

11.10 To consider holding a community event in Spring 2024

This has been briefly discussed previously.

11.11 To consider how to mark the Parish Council's 130th Anniversary

This has been briefly discussed previously.

11.12 Other Ideas

Any other ideas can be discussed.

12 Claims received from and on behalf of Cllr. Clive Robinson

12.1 Update on actions taken in respect of the Rectification Notice received pursuant to Article 16 UK GDPR

The wording proposed by BP Collins was agreed by Simons Muirhead Burton LLP and was subsequently applied at the beginning of each of the relevant historic documents. These rectified versions of the documents were then sent to Simons Muirhead Burton LLP.

The rectified versions of four of the documents were also uploaded to the Parish Council's website to replace the previous versions of these documents and hard copies of the rectified documents replaced the previous versions in the relevant minute folder. It was also clarified that the fifth document would not be published and made publicly available as it is not a publicly available document.

12.2 To consider the increased legal costs for responding to the Rectification Notice

The total fees approved and paid so far are £3,450.60 plus VAT. An invoice for the sum of £840.50 plus VAT has been received this month. This invoice is included in the September 2023 cashbook.

12.3 To consider the policies requested by Cllr. Clive Robinson

Cllr. Robinson has proposed that the Parish Council adopts three new policies.

1. The Parish Council instructs the Clerk to publish no less than twice a month a list of correspondence to all Parish Councillors. The list to include date of communication, who with (Councillor, parishioner or body), form of communication (letter, report, phone call etc) and a one line brief description of the communication. This to be for ALL communications both received and made by the Clerk.
2. The Parish Council as a matter of policy will not use public funds to provide memorials of any kind to current or past Councillors or Officials, nor will it use public funds to provide gifts to any Councillors current or past or to any Officials.
3. The Parish Council recognises the immense contribution to the quality of the community obtained by the local green belt. The Parish Council therefore as a matter of policy will actively OPPOSE the release of any green belt land within the parish and actively OPPOSE any and all new dwellings or business units being created on the local green belt.

12.4 To note the letter received from Wellers Reece-Jones and update on steps taken

The Parish Council has received a letter from Wellers Reece-Jones who have been appointed by Cllr Clive Robinson. A copy of the letter was sent to parish councillors shortly after receipt.