

# FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 30 OCTOBER 2023 AT 7.30 P.M. AT FARNHAM COMMON VILLAGE HALL, VICTORIA ROAD, FARNHAM COMMON, SL2 3NL**

## **Present**

Marilyn Rolfe (Chair)	Tony Birkett
Katherine Damsell	Bob Milne
David Moore	Jenny Quilter
Judith Hall (Clerk)	

One member of the public and Buckinghamshire Councillor Dev Dhillon were in attendance.

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 and advised that prior to the meeting all councillors had been provided with a report providing information on agenda items. The report can be downloaded from the Parish Council website or a hard copy is available upon request.

## **23/101/PC Apologies for absence**

Paul Rowley

## **23/102/PC Declarations of Interest**

The Chair declared an interest in respect of agenda item 6.1 (23/107.1/PC below).

## **23/103/PC To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2023**

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

## **23/104/PC Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda - for information only)**

### **104.1 Update from the Neighbourhood Policing Team**

Those present were disappointed with the report provided by the Neighbourhood Policing Team and noted that there was nothing included about the recent thefts from retail properties along The Broadway or the antisocial behaviour involving motorbikes in Blackpond Lane. It was suggested that it may be appropriate to make a Freedom of Information Act request for accurate and complete crime statistics for the parish.

### **104.2 Update on meetings with Buckinghamshire Highways**

The content of the information report was noted and Tony Birkett advised that Buckinghamshire Highways now have a Green Asset Enforcement Officer who may be able to look as concerns raised regarding the felling of mature trees on public land.

### **104.3 Update on Annual Playground Inspections**

The content of the information report was noted.

### **104.4 Update on Neighbourhood Plan**

The content of the information report was noted.

### **104.5 Update on Community Speedwatch**

The content of the information report was noted and Tony Birkett advised that the group had been verbally abused at the last two sessions by a pedestrian and a driver, both of whom had been reported. Those present expressed disappointment at this and thanked the volunteers to taking part in this initiative.

### **104.6 Update on Freedom of Information Act request**

The content of the information report was noted.

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

The content of the information report was noted and the Chair confirmed her agreement to attend the session on 4 November 2023 to support Paul Rowley.

#### 104.8 Update on personal injury claim received

The content of the information report was noted.

#### 104.9 Confirmation of representation at Remembrance Events

The content of the information report was noted. Bob Milne agreed to lay the posies on the war graves in St Mary's Churchyard. In addition, Jenny Quilter offered to deputise for Marilyn Rolfe at Kingsway Green on 11 November 2023 and Katherine Damsell offered to deputise for Paul Rowley at the Remembrance Service on 12 November 2023, if required.

### **23/105/PC Claims received from and on behalf of Cllr. Clive Robinson**

#### 105.1 To ratify the appointment of BP Collins

The appointment of BP Collins **was ratified** and the confidential budget suggested by BP Collins **was agreed**.

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

Following a discussion, delegated powers were granted to Katherine Damsell, Tony Birkett and the Clerk to progress this matter to a close with the following conditions:

- a. They act in accordance with advice received from BP Collins.
- b. Any action taken under this arrangement must be reported at the next parish council meeting, with interim updates as appropriate.
- c. Costs are limited to the agreed budget, with any increase being considered at a parish council meeting.

### **23/106/PC To consider feedback on first Farmers Market**

David Moore advised that the first monthly market, which had 26 vendors, was enjoyed by visitors and he had received feedback from visitors and vendors, the majority of which identified that more publicity was needed. It **was agreed** that David Moore would prepare a communications plan and would be added as an Administrator to the Parish Council's Facebook page to facilitate regular communication. The Clerk was asked to contact Cooper's Markets for more information to allow active marketing of the vendors that would be at the next market and to check whether there is a market in December 2023. It was **also agreed** that another 5ft by 2ft banner would be produced for the fence outside Farnham Common Infant School. Tony Birkett offered to circulate posters through his contacts via his Residents and Traders Association work. Finally, it **was agreed** that the continuation of the market would be reviewed at the November 2023 parish council meeting.

### **23/107/PC Contracts:**

#### 107.1 Update on new office lease

The Chair, who had previously declared her interest as a trustee of Farnham Common Village Hall, advised that the service charge invoices would be received shortly and then the Lease would be completed.

#### 107.2 Update on contracts and tenders

The content of the information report was noted.

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

Katherine Damsell shared the list of assets and responsibilities she had prepared with the Clerk with those present. There was then a discussion about the preferred format for the performance management checklists she had prepared. It **was agreed** that the best format was as an Excel spreadsheet. Jenny Quilter offered to help her populate the checklists with the criteria currently listed in Word documents. It was agreed that these would be prepared over the coming months for trialling in January – March 2024 with a view to adoption from 1 April 2024.

### **23/108/PC Projects (continued from September 2023 Meeting):**

#### 108.1 Boundary Copse, Farnham Royal

The content of the information report was noted and it **was agreed** that the initial scope would be to repair the wall and clear some of the vegetation to create a more open space. Bob Milne advised that given the passage of time since the contractor had provided the quote to repair the wall to Buckinghamshire Council, the Clerk was contacting them directly for an updated quote. In addition, the Clerk would request quotes for the clearance work from two or three contractors following the meeting with the arboriculturist to agree the scope for this aspect.

It was noted that concerns had been raised by some residents in Bishops Orchard regarding vegetation along the boundary of the Copse and these would also be discussed with the arboriculturist at the meeting and that the Clerk was investigating ownership of the wooden fence along the boundary as it was believed to be owned by L & Q although they had apparently denied this to the residents.

#### 108.2 Playgrounds

The content of the information report was noted and it **was agreed** that all of the wood from the existing multiplay unit would be disposed of by the contractor. In addition, Jenny Quilter shared a proposal for the old Guide Hut site and the Clerk was asked to obtain a quote for this work for further discussion at the Finance Committee meeting in November 2023.

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

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that further discussion would take place for budgeting purposes at the Finance Committee meeting in November 2023.

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

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that further discussion would take place for budgeting purposes at the Finance Committee meeting in November 2023.

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

Following a discussion, it was felt that lighting a beacon may not be appropriate as this had been considered and discounted in previous years. Tony Birkett offered to set up a display in the village hall for an event such as an afternoon tea and/or suitable film screening in partnership with the Village Cinema. He also offered to deliver presentations at the schools. Those present felt these were interesting proposals.

### **23/109/PC To consider potential new policies:**

#### 109.1 Commemorative Acts

Following a discussion on the draft policy that had been circulated, it was felt that further consideration was necessary as it was not appropriate for Temple Dell to become a garden of remembrance and more detail was required regarding what acts/items would be appropriate given the needs of the parish.

#### 109.2 Community Noticeboard

This guidance **was agreed** but Bob Milne would like to review the time periods for displaying material.

#### 109.3 Correspondence List

The Clerk advised that she had sought advice from Breakthrough Communications, who are specialists in data compliance, via Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils on this potential policy proposed by Cllr. Robinson. Breakthrough Communications do not recommend that the Parish Council adopt this policy for a few reasons but primarily, as the data subjects would have no idea that their communication will be notified to everyone else, and the Clerk in doing so may well not have a lawful basis to process the subject's data in that way. They continued that if the Parish Council decided it would like to adopt this policy, it should undertake a robust and thorough Data Protection Impact Assessment in order to prove it has considered the rights and freedoms of the unsuspecting data subjects that it will process in this way. The Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils has recommended that this advice is considered very carefully prior to any resolutions being made advising that a Data Protection Impact Assessment would require a great deal of work and, potentially, the employment of a specialist company to assist with compliance that would cost the Parish Council in terms of allocation of working hours and finances.

#### 109.4 Memorials for current or past Councillors or Officials

Following a discussion, it **was agreed** that the points raised in this potential policy proposed by Cllr. Robinson could be included in the Commemorative Acts policy rather than requiring a standalone policy.

#### 109.5 Green Belt

Following a brief discussion, those present referred to the parish council meeting held in September 2023 where it was stated that parish councillors wished to discuss the potential policy with Cllr. Robinson who had proposed it. Questions were raised as to whether a policy of this nature was required given that the green belt has the highest protection afforded under national planning policy.

### **23/110/PC Finance:**

110.1 To note the review of September 2023 bank reconciliation under paragraph 2.2 of Finance Regulations

It **was noted** that Jenny Quilter had reviewed and verified the September 2023 bank reconciliations.

110.2 To consider the September 2023 Management Accounts

The September 2023 Management Accounts were noted and it was agreed that a detailed review would be carried out at the Finance Committee meeting in November 2023.

110.3 To consider payments and note receipts, as per the October 2023 cashbook

The payments were **approved** and the receipts were noted.

### **23/111/PC Planning:**

111.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

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

The Chair, as Chair of the Planning Working Group, drew parish councillors' attention to the following applications:

- PL/23/3135/FA 22 Holly Close, Farnham Common for proposed single storey side extensions, two storey rear extension, front porch, and all associate works.
- PL/23/2563/VRC Land to the South Of Cut Heath House, Parsonage Lane, Farnham Common for a variation of condition 15 (approved plans) of planning permission PL/21/3357/FA (Erection of 3 residential dwellings, gate and associated vehicular access) to allow single storey rear extensions to each dwelling, alterations to fenestration and roof, addition of further roof lights, and removal of chimneys.
- PL/23/3125/FA The New House, Parsonage Lane, Farnham Common for a loft conversion with rear/side dormer.

Tony Birkett also wanted those present to be aware of a new application, PL/23/0706/FA Silver Beeches, Collinswood Road, Farnham Common for change of use from residential triple garage with first floor ancillary accommodation to 2 treatment room dental surgery with rear dormer, front and side porch canopies, changes to doors and windows, installation of solar panels, and amended access from Collinswood Rd (part retrospective) and for the existing north eastern access point to be reinstated to serve Silver Beeches.

111.2 To note recent planning decisions

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

### **23/112/PC Any Other Business (for information only)**

112.1 The Clerk advised that the contractors who maintain the streetlights managed by the Parish Council had carried out a review of all streetlights and have advised that two heads need replacing. One in Blackpond Lane and one on Park Road at the junction with Parsonage Lane. The cost of each head is £360 so the total cost would be £780 This expenditure was informally agreed to enable the lights to be repaired. The decision will be ratified at the parish council meeting in November 2023.

112.2 The Clerk advised that she had been contacted by a resident of Christmas Lane who was requesting a reduction in the speed limit of that road to 20mph. The Clerk advised that she had replied to the resident stating that she was not sure that Buckinghamshire Council would support a reduction as the decision to implement an advisory 20mph speed limit outside Farnham Common Infant School had been revoked due to a wider Buckinghamshire Council decision. To assist the resident, the Clerk had suggested reviewing whether there is a site on Christmas Lane that could be used for Community Speedwatch and/or for the new Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign(s).

112.3 The Clerk advised that she had been contacted by a resident for whom she had previously reported the damaged road name sign at the bottom of Mayflower Way. Buckinghamshire Council have advised that there is a delay in completing this type of work due to the ongoing merging of services previously provided by the four district councils into Buckinghamshire Highways. The resident has requested that as Buckinghamshire Council has not yet repaired/replaced the sign the Parish Council take the required action and invoice Buckinghamshire Council for reimbursement. Those present did not feel it was appropriate to take this action as it may set a precedent and it was likely to be difficult to obtain payment from Buckinghamshire Council without their prior agreement.

112.4 The Clerk advised that she had been contacted by a resident who had previously raised concerns about the removal of mature oak trees as a precursor to a planning application in Templewood Lane. The

resident has requested that now the new front boundary treatment is almost complete the Parish Council writes to the property owner either instructing them to replace the mature trees with similar ones before winter sets in or advising that the Parish Council will replace them and charge the property owner for the work. Those present did not feel it was appropriate to contact the property owner regarding this as the removal of the trees was raised with Buckinghamshire Council by the Parish Council as part of the consultation on the planning application and following discussions between Buckinghamshire Council and the property owner revised proposals were submitted which included a provision for replacement planting of three beech trees behind the boundary treatment to help mitigate the loss of trees and ensure future visual amenities. This was approved by the Tree Officer and the planning permission contains a provision that all planting shall be carried out in the first planting season following substantial completion of the development. It therefore appears that as long as the property owner plants the three beech trees no further action is applicable. Obviously if they do not, the Parish Council will request enforcement action.

112.5 Tony Birkett requested that the new application for a Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign was progressed and that consideration was given at the Finance Committee meeting in November 2023 to purchasing two units.

### **23/113/PC Next parish council meetings:**

The meeting closed at 22.45pm.

Finance Committee on 13 November 2023 at 7.30pm at Farnham Royal Village Hall

Full Council on 27 November 2023 at 7.30pm at Farnham Royal Village Hall

Finance Committee on 8 January 2024 at 7.30pm at Farnham Royal Village Hall

Full Council on 29 January 2024 at 7.30pm at Farnham Common Village Hall

### **OPEN FORUM**

A resident from Green Lane in Farnham Common, raised his concern about speeding on Green Lane, Hawthorn Lane and Kingsway and asked how to request that the speed limit is reduced to 20mph. The Chair felt that the installation of the new double yellow lines would help but the resident did not agree and felt that these were to deal with a problem that occurred three years ago, in lockdown and no longer existed. Cllr. Dhillon advised that the installation of the new double yellow lines was imminent as some temporary markers were put out yesterday. The Clerk suggested that given Buckinghamshire Council's wider decision not to support 20mph speed limits it was unlikely that a change would be approved but advised that it might be possible to find a site(s) for Community Speedwatch on these roads and/or the new Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign(s) ("MVAS"). Tony Birkett explained that the MVAS would record data that could then be discussed with Buckinghamshire Highways.

Cllr. Dhillon expressed his frustration with the lack of police support for residents of Blackpond Lane in respect of the antisocial behaviour with motorbikes that is frightening residents. He acknowledged that residents may not now be reporting these activities as often but this is because when they have spent significant time reporting in the past no one comes. He now wished to request a formal meeting with the Neighbourhood Policing Team, the Parish Council and Superintendent Emma Burroughs, Local Police Area Commander for South Buckinghamshire. This meeting would also discuss the significant number of thefts from retail premises along The Broadway. Tony Birkett suggested writing a formal letter to the Neighbourhood Policing Team requesting a meeting to discuss the growing antisocial behaviour and increasingly violent robberies from retail premises.

Cllr. Dhillon also reminded the Clerk that he was waiting for dates for a meeting with Buckinghamshire Council officers to discuss one of the developments on the boundary of The Broadway car park.

Cllr. Dhillon asked which parish councillor would be joining him for 'Meet Your Local Councillors' on 4 November 2023. The Clerk confirmed that Paul Rowley would be attending and the Chair advised that she would also join them.