

FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 7.30 P.M. AT FARNHAM ROYAL VILLAGE HALL, FARNHAM LANE, FARNHAM ROYAL, SL2 3AX

Present

Paul Rowley (Chair)	Marilyn Rolfe
Tony Birkett	Katherine Damsell
David Moore	Judith Hall (Clerk)

Buckinghamshire Councillor Dev Dhillon and Graham White of Beeches Community Board 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 giving information on agenda items. The report can be downloaded from the Parish Council website or a hard copy is available upon request.

23/114/PC Apologies for absence

Jenny Quilter and Bob Milne

23/115/PC Declarations of Interest

None

23/116/PC To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2023

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

23/117/PC Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda - for information only)

117.1 Update from the Neighbourhood Policing Team

Those present thanked the Neighbourhood Policing Team for their report but felt it did not reflect what they see and hear in the community. They also felt that more information could be given such as the steps taken to investigate the crimes, whether any arrests had been made and a comparison with previous months. Marilyn Rolfe suggested providing an example of a possible format to the Team. The Chair advised that he had spoken to PCSO Angela O'Connell about the epidemic of theft from shops and businesses along The Broadway and she had agreed to meet with concerned owners. Tony Birkett suggested that the Parish Council should look at ways to actively engage with the Police and the Chair volunteered to take the lead on this.

117.2 Update on Community Speedwatch

The content of the report was noted. Those present thanked Tony Birkett for leading this initiative and the volunteers for giving up their time to attend the various sessions. It was noted that more volunteers are needed. Tony Birkett advised that the group had seen a lot of vehicle movements and several speeders had been reported.

117.3 Update on Freedom of Information Act request

The content of the report was noted.

117.4 Update on 'Meet Your Local Councillors'

The content of the report was noted. The Chair added that the new market was also contributing to the parking issues in Scott Close. Marilyn Rolfe suggested that double yellow lines should be installed at the entrance to the close. David Moore volunteered to attend the next session, on 13 January 2024.

117.5 Update on personal injury claim received

The content of the report was noted.

117.6 Update on Farnham Common Playground

The content of the report was noted. The Chair added that there had been no work on site today but this was possibly due to the bad weather. Those present felt the work was progressing well.

117.7 Update on Claims received from and on behalf of Cllr. Clive Robinson

The content of the report was noted.

23/118/PC To consider feedback on Cooper's Market Farnham Common

A number of the councillors present attended the market on 26 November 2023. They felt that the market makes a positive contribution to the parish and should be supported as the stalls offer a variety of produce all of which is excellent quality. It was noted that, as expected, there were fewer stalls than at the October market but that there were quite a few visitors. David Moore advised that he had put up the marketing boards as agreed and had tried to post in the Farnhams Community Facebook Group but was advised that Cooper's Markets would be posting themselves so parish council posts would not be accepted. He also suggested that footfall would improve, for both the market and the local shops and businesses, if Buckinghamshire Council would allow the market to take place in The Broadway car park. It **was agreed** that the Parish Council would wait for the end of the three month trial and then discuss the future of the market with Cooper's Markets.

23/119/PC Contracts:

119.1 Update on new maintenance contracts

The content of the report was noted. It **was agreed** that the Chair and Katherine Damsell would sign the contracts on behalf of the Parish Council.

119.2 Consider tenders received for the Maintenance of Physical Assets

Those present reviewed the tenders received and asked the Clerk to take up references for RJC Landscapes Ltd. It **was agreed** that the Chair and Katherine Damsell would review the references and meet the contractor before deciding on which contractor to recommend. A recommendation would then be issued to all councillors by email with any informal decision being ratified at the January 2024 parish council meeting.

23/120/PC Projects (continued from September 2023 Meeting):

120.1 To consider repairs to retaining wall and removal of scrub and upgrowth at Boundary Copse

The content of the report was noted. It **was agreed** that the wall repairs and repointing should be carried out and in the absence of an updated quote, a budget of £8,000 (based on the previous quote) **was agreed**. In addition, the quote of £7,140 provided by Amersham Town Council for clearance work in accordance with the arboriculturist's recommendations **was agreed** as an extension of their existing maintenance contract. It **was further agreed** that this work would not start until an ecology assessment had taken place to determine any potential impact on habits and protected species. A budget of £750 **was agreed** to pay the costs of the assessment. The ecology assessment is to be circulated to parish councillors upon receipt.

120.2 To consider purchasing one Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign

The content of the report was noted. It **was agreed** that one battery operated sign, the associated accessories and onsite training would be purchased at a cost of £4,043. Tony Birkett advised that there was an outstanding query regarding the increase in the cost of the onsite training so this figure may reduce slightly. The Chair took the opportunity of having the Manager of the Beeches Community Board at the meeting to ask whether the Board would match fund the purchase. The Manager suggested that the Clerk email the quote to him for review. It was noted that due to the Board's funding conditions, the order could not be placed until a decision on the request had been made.

120.3 To consider proposal for Guide Hut Site

The content of the report was noted. The proposal for creating a grassed area with some natural habitat and a small picnic area next to the refurbished playground **was agreed**. The quote provided by Amersham Town Council of £329 for mowing the site, weedkilling the re-growth, rotovating and re-seed with rye grass **was agreed**. The quote provided by Amersham Town Council of £900 for installing three paving slab bases for three picnic benches **was agreed**. The purchase of one 6 x A4 single door noticeboard in green from Earth Anchors at a cost of £524 **was agreed**. The quote provided by Amersham Town Council of £100 for installing the noticeboard **was agreed**. The purchase of three Pembridge picnic tables from Glasdon at a cost of £3,550 **was agreed** but before doing so it was agreed that local businesses should

be given the opportunity to sponsor one of the benches. Tony Birkett offered to contact the businesses with details and feedback to the parish council. It **was also agreed** that the Clerk would write to the properties in Drew Meadow that back onto the site to explain the plan.

120.4 To consider potential community events in 2024

Katherine Damsell advised that she had met with Jenny Quilter and the Clerk to discuss at a high level the various events that had previously been suggested at parish council meetings. She had prepared and circulated a short document for each which she asked parish councillors to review before the Finance Committee meeting on 8 January 2024 so that any budget requirements could be discussed. Marilyn Rolfe suggested asking the Farnham Common Branch of the Royal British Legion if they would like to be involved with any event to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of D Day. Those present thought this was a good idea and she agreed to take this forward.

23/121/PC Finance:

121.1 To ratify the purchase of new lights for the Christmas tree on Kingsway Green

The purchase of new lights for the Christmas tree on Kingsway Green at a cost of £133.17 plus VAT **was ratified**.

121.2 To consider repairs to a boundary fence at Farnham Common Sports Club

Following a discussion regarding who was responsible for such repairs, it **was agreed** that the Parish Council would not pay the full cost of these repairs but could make a contribution. It was suggested that it may be sensible to plant a prickly hedge rather than replace the chain link fence.

121.3 To receive report from latest Finance Committee Meeting inc. Draft 2024/25 Budget

Katherine Damsell, as Lead Councillor for Finance and Contracts, advised that the Finance Committee meeting earlier this month had been very productive with an initial discussion on the draft budget, which contained some items that needed clarifying, including the community events and a large contingency. She continued that currently the proposal was for a deficit budget for the year in order to get things done and it was proposed that efforts are made to complete outstanding projects before the current year end in order to have a cleaner start to next year. She also advised that there had been a discussion regarding a recommendation to reduce general reserves to a figure equal to 3 months expenditure in line with national guidance.

121.4 To consider the September 2023 Management Accounts

Katherine Damsell advised that following a detailed review of the September 2023 Management Accounts at the Finance Committee meeting on 13 November 2023 it was resolved to recommend acceptance at this parish council meeting. The Management Accounts **were agreed**.

121.5 To consider payments and note receipts, as per the November 2023 cashbook

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

23/122/PC Planning:

122.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

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

Marilyn Rolfe, as Chair of the Planning Working Group, drew parish councillors' attention to the following 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.

Tony Birkett wanted those present to be aware of a new application:

- PL/23/3416/FA 1 Mayflower Way, Farnham Common for the demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two new dwellings.

122.2 To note recent planning decisions

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

Marilyn Rolfe drew parish councillors' attention to the decisions regarding the following applications:

- PL/23/0926/FA 1 Fairfield Lane, Farnham Royal for subdivision of plot, erection of a new dwelling with attached garage and formation of vehicular access
- PL/23/2968/FA Stoke Park House, Stoke Park Avenue, Farnham Royal for a roof extension incorporating front dormer windows and rear dormer window with juliet balcony and rooflight, changes to the design of the front and rear gables including insertion of windows.

23/123/PC Any Other Business (for information only)

123.1 Katherine Damsell sought clarification regarding proposed amendments to the Commemorative Acts Policy asking whether councillors felt it was appropriate for only native trees to be planted and whether they wanted to include a list of commemorative acts the parish council would and would not consider. Those present felt it was appropriate to stipulate native trees but it was not necessary to include a list of specific acts.

123.2 Katherine Damsell raised the call for help posted in the Farnhams Community Facebook Group regarding the planning appeal for part of the development at Cut Heath House in Parsonage Lane and asked whether the Parish Council had replied objecting to the development. Marilyn Rolfe confirmed that objections had been submitted.

123.3 Those present noted that the Christmas lights looked lovely but the Chair suggested that it would be nice to have more lights in Farnham Royal. Katherine Damsell felt this could be reviewed as part of the 2024/25 budget discussions.

23/124/PC Next parish council meetings:

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

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

Full Council (Focus on Projects) on 26 February 2024 at 7.30pm at Farnham Royal Village Hall

OPEN FORUM

Cllr. Dhillon introduced Graham White, Manager of the Beeches Community Board. He also advised that he had agreed to become Chairman of the Beeches Community Board following David Anthony's resignation.

Cllr. Dhillon advised that Buckinghamshire Council had announced that there would be free parking in The Broadway car park on 9 December and 16 December 2023 to support Christmas shopping.

Cllr. Dhillon advised that the installation of the new yellow lines on Hawthorn Lane was running late due to the bad weather but it was hoped that these would be finished in December 2023.

Cllr. Dhillon expressed his opinion that the resurfacing work at the bottom of the A355 in Farnham Royal was really good and he advised that he would be pushing for resurfacing further north.

Tony Birkett asked Cllr. Dhillon to raise the abandoned car at the back of The Broadway car park with Buckinghamshire Council to arrange its removal. Graham White advised it is possible for the Waste Team at Buckinghamshire Council to dispose of it and he agreed to contact them in the morning to progress this.

Cllr. Dhillon advised that he had requested that application PL/23/1259 Firkin, One Pin Lane, Farnham Common was called in by the Planning Committee but having spoken in depth to the Planning Officer he was not certain this was now appropriate.