

FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 20 MAY 2024 AT 7.30 P.M. AT FARNHAM COMMON VILLAGE HALL, VICTORIA ROAD, FARNHAM COMMON, SL2 3NL

Present

Paul Rowley (Chair)
Tony Birkett
Katherine Damsell
David Moore
Jenny Quilter
Judith Hall (Clerk)

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.

24/43/PC To elect a Chairman (and Declaration of Acceptance of Office)

Paul Rowley was nominated and accepted the appointment. He advised that this would be his last term as Chairman and that he would like to work with the Clerk and other councillors to hand over the role.

24/44/PC To elect a Vice Chairman

Jenny Quilter was nominated and accepted the appointment.

24/45/PC Apologies for absence

Bob Milne

24/46/PC To receive declarations of interest from Members

The Clerk advised that new declaration forms had been sent to all parish councillors. Tony Birkett advised that there had been no change to the interests previously declared. Katherine Damsell and David Moore advised that they had recently completed updated declarations. The Chairman submitted a new declaration. Jenny Quilter advised that she would complete a new declaration and send it to the Clerk.

24/47/PC To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2024

The Chairman requested that 'not already disclosed' was added to 24/35/PC Declarations of Interest. This was **agreed** and the minutes were **approved**. It was **agreed** that they would be signed by the Chair.

24/48/PC Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda - for information only)

48.1 Update on Community Speedwatch

The contents of the report was noted. Tony Birkett, as Lead Councillor for Highways, added that there is now a volunteer rota in place for the next few months. He also advised that there are now three vehicle activated signs in the parish, two of which are mobile with data collection capabilities. The Chairman and all those present thanked the team of volunteers for their continued efforts.

48.2 Update on Parish Council office lease

The contents of the report was noted. Katherine Damsell, as Lead Councillor for Finance and Contracts, advised that she was looking to resolve this issue before the summer break and would be writing to the landlords if nothing was heard in the next few weeks.

48.3 Update on anti-social behaviour in Blackpond Lane

The contents of the report was noted. Those present were pleased a solution was being progressed but requested further clarity regarding who was commissioning the work and who was responsible for ongoing maintenance and any future liabilities. The Chairman reiterated that the Parish Council was only facilitating discussions to obtain a solution and would not be taking any responsibilities going forward.

48.4 Update on new 95 day notice account with the Co-operative Bank plc

The content of the report was noted.

24/49/PC To review:

49.1 Standing Orders

The Standing Orders were **agreed**. The Clerk was asked to arrange the Code of Conduct training refer to in paragraph 9.1 for all councillors.

49.2 Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct was **agreed**. Tony Birkett questioned whether the provisions were suitable for the purposes of this parish council and it was agreed that he would work with the Clerk and Chairman to investigate with outside organisations whether the Code would benefit from some revisions.

49.3 Asset Register

The Asset Register was **agreed**. Katherine Damsell advised that she would like to look at the format and make sure the Register links to the work she and the Clerk have been doing to better understand and protect the parish's assets. The possibility of generating income through advertising on the bus shelters was also raised. The Clerk and Katherine Damsell agreed to look at this.

49.4 Risk Assessment

The Risk Assessment was **agreed**. Jenny Quilter advised that a sheet should be included to cover workplace and employee safety and she would work with the Clerk on this to include the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations and lone working measures discussed at the March 2024 parish council meeting. It was then **agreed** that Jenny Quilter, as Vice Chair, would review the risk assessment quarterly going forward.

49.5 Finance Regulations

Katherine Damsell, as Lead Councillor for Finance and Contracts, advised that the new Finance Regulations were closely based on the new model regulations produced by the National Association of Local Councils. She continued that the new model was broadly the same as the existing regulations but now included provisions for online banking. It was also noted that the Chairman's Allowance, included in the existing regulations, had been removed in the proposed regulations. Finally, she advised that it would be necessary to provide some additional information to councillors regarding payments made and she was working with the Clerk to find the most efficient way of providing that information.

The Finance Regulations was **adopted**.

49.6 Information & Data Protection Policy

The Information & Data Protection Policy was **agreed**.

The Clerk advised that in line with advice and recommendations, parish councillors really should be using their @farnhamroyal-pc.gov.uk email addresses and that from 1 September 2024 all emails would be issued to those addresses. She asked councillors to make sure they know how to access them and that they checked them regularly. Those present asked the Clerk to resend the instructions. Tony Birkett also raised concerns about the robustness of the email system and it being accessed on mobile phones as these are not secure devices. He advised that he had discussed the system with CST, the parish council's provider and felt that there may be some easy opportunities to improve the system. He offered to work with the Clerk on this with CST.

24/50/PC To review delegation arrangements

The delegation arrangements were **agreed**.

24/51/PC To review the terms of reference of the Finance Committee and appoint members

The terms of reference were **agreed**.

Tony Birkett, Katherine Damsell, Jenny Quilter and Paul Rowley were appointed to the Finance Committee.

In addition, Tony Birkett nominated Clive Robinson due to his background and eye for detail. The Clerk was asked to advise Clive Robinson of his nomination and ask if he would like to join the committee.

24/52/PC To review the terms of reference of the Planning Working Group and appoint members

The terms of reference were **agreed**.

Tony Birkett, Paul Rowley and Jenny Quilter were appointed to the Planning Working Group.

In addition, Tony Birkett nominated Clive Robinson due to his ongoing interest in planning matters. The Clerk was asked to advise Clive Robinson of his nomination and ask if he would like to join the working group.

24/53/PC To make the following appointments:

53.1 Data Protection Officer

David Moore was appointed Data Protection Officer.

53.2 Lead Councillor – Finance and Contracts

Katherine Damsell was appointed Lead Councillor for Finance and Contracts.

53.3 Lead Councillor – Planning

Tony Birkett was appointed Lead Councillor for Planning.

53.4 Lead Councillor – Projects

Tony Birkett was appointed Lead Councillor for Projects.

53.5 Lead Councillor - Highways

Tony Birkett was appointed Lead Councillor for Highways.

53.6 Lead Councillor – Woodlands and Open Spaces

Bob Milne was appointed Lead Councillor for Woodlands and Open Spaces having confirmed his willingness to accept the role prior to the meeting.

53.7 Lead Councillor – Community

David Moore was appointed Lead Councillor for Community.

53.8 Lead Councillor – Wellbeing

Jenny Quilter was appointed Lead Councillor for Wellbeing with Paul Rowley attending the Beeches Community Board meetings on her behalf.

53.9 Lead Councillor – Environment

Jenny Quilter was appointed Lead Councillor for Environment.

24/54/PC To review the terms of reference and appoint a representative(s) on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The terms of reference were **agreed**.

Paul Rowley was appointed as the parish council's representative on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

24/55/PC To consider appointing Peter Cathcart and Katherine Damsell Nominative Trustees of Farnham Royal Relief in Sickness Charities

Following a discussion regarding the charities, those present thanked Peter Cathcart for his contribution as a long serving trustee but felt it appropriate to seek a new trustee to replace him. David Moore volunteered to take the appointment and this was **agreed**. The appointment of Katherine Damsell was also **agreed**. The Clerk advised that it would be necessary to convene a meeting of the trustees to appoint two co-optative trustees. Paul Rowley and Tony Birkett volunteered to become co-optative trustees.

24/56/PC To appoint representatives on the following Outside Bodies and agree arrangements for reporting back:

56.1 Burnham Beeches Community Board and its Action Groups

The following parish councillors were appointed as representatives on the Burnham Beeches Community

Board and its Action Groups:

- Tony Birkett as Lead Councillor for Highways
- Jenny Quilter as Lead Councillor for Environment
- Paul Rowley on behalf of Jenny Quilter as Lead Councillor for Wellbeing

In addition, all parish councillors were reminded that they are invited to attend Community Board meetings.

56.2 Farnham Common Sports Club

Katherine Damsell and Paul Rowley were appointed as representatives on the Main Committee of Farnham Common Sports Club. The Clerk was asked to obtain the meeting dates for the next twelve months from the Club Secretary.

56.3 Farnhams Magazine

Those present acknowledged the benefit to the parish of having the magazine and thanked the volunteers for producing it but it was **agreed** that as the parish council does not provide regular financial support to the magazine it was not appropriate to nominate a permanent representative to sit on their committee. Paul Rowley offered to discuss this decision with the committee members.

56.4 Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group

Those present nominated Bob Milne in his role as Lead Councillor for Woodlands and Open Spaces. The Clerk was asked to advise Bob Milne of his nomination and ask whether he would like to be the appointed representative on the Group. If not, it was agreed that the parish council would not nominate a permanent representative and, in that case, the Clerk would request a copy of the agenda of each meeting for review and a representative would then attend, if necessary.

56.5 South Bucks Association of Local Councils

Paul Rowley as Chairman and Jenny Quilter as Vice Chair were appointed as representatives on the South Bucks Association of Local Councils.

24/57/PC To confirm arrangement for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks

The Clerk advised that she had added the new playground at Farnham Common to the policy. The arrangements for insurance were **agreed**. Katherine Damsell advised that she was reviewing some of the provisions with the Clerk and would provide a recommendation for any suggested amendments to the July 2024 parish council meeting so they could be discussed with the broker before renewal on 1 October 2024.

24/58/PC To review the Council's and Clerk's subscriptions

The subscriptions were reviewed and the Clerk advised that the parish council could move from Zoom to MS Teams, which is included in the parish council's MS Office package saving the Zoom subscription. This was **agreed**.

24/59/PC To agree meeting dates and times for parish council meetings and committee meetings up to May 2025

The following meeting dates were **agreed**:

Date	Type	Location	Time
24 June	Full Council - Focus on Projects	Farnham Royal Village Hall	7.30pm
22 July	Full Council	Farnham Common Village Hall	7.30pm
23 September	Full Council - Focus on Projects	Farnham Royal Village Hall	7.30pm
28 October	Full Council	Farnham Common Village Hall	7.30pm
11 November	Finance Committee	Farnham Common Village Hall	7.30pm
25 November	Full Council	Farnham Royal Village Hall	7.30pm

13 January	Finance Committee	Farnham Royal Village Hall	7.30pm
27 January	Full Council	Farnham Common Village Hall	7.30pm
24 February	Full Council	Farnham Royal Village Hall	7.30pm
24 March	Full Council - Focus on Projects	Farnham Common Village Hall	7.30pm
31 March	Annual Parish Meeting	Farnham Common Village Hall	7.00pm
28 April	Full Council	Farnham Royal Village Hall	7.30pm
TBC May	Annual Meeting	Farnham Common Village Hall	7.30pm

The date of the Annual Meeting will be confirmed once the date of the local elections has been published as in an election year the meeting must be held on or within fourteen days after the day on which the councillors elected at that election take office.

It was noted that all the above meetings would be open to the public and that the Planning Working Group would continue to meet remotely every three weeks.

24/60/PC To review flag flying arrangements for the next 12 months

It was **agreed** that the Clerk would prepare a draft policy for consideration at a future meeting and the decision on which national events to mark by flying a different flag would be taken at that time.

24/61/PC Finance:

61.1 To ratify purchase of replacement timber inc. installation for basket swing in Farnham Park Playing Fields.

The informal decision to purchase a replacement timber including installation for the basket swing in Farnham Park Playing Fields was **ratified** at a cost of £2,244 plus VAT.

61.2 To consider purchasing a second set of batteries for the new Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign

The second set of batteries for the new Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign at a cost of £670 plus VAT were **agreed**.

61.3 To consider purchasing a second set of batteries for the old Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign

The second set of batteries for the old Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign at a cost of £330 plus VAT were **agreed**.

61.4 To consider adding activities relating to the old Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign to Amersham Town Council's Physical Assets contract

It was agreed that the activities relating to the old Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign would be added to Amersham Town Council's Physical Assets contract at a cost of £624 plus VAT per annum.

61.5 To approve payments and note receipts, as per the May 2024 cashbook

Katherine Damsell as Lead Councillor for Finance and Contracts noted an amount included on the cashbook of £129.85 that is due to her as reimbursement for items purchased by her for the Tea Dance. She also advised that the sum of £33,319.23 had been received unexpectedly in respect of two Community Infrastructure Levy payments on developments within the parish. The payments **were approved** and the receipts **were noted**.

61.6 To consider transferring funds to the Instant Access Deposit Account

Katherine Damsell proposed that after this month's cashbook payments had been made, funds should be transferred to the instant access deposit account leaving a balance of £20,000 in the current account. This was **agreed**. It was further **agreed** that the current account balance would then be maintained at £20,000.

61.7 To consider the 2023/24 Annual Accounts

The Clerk explained that under the finance rules, the purchase of the new playground is fully expensed in the year of purchase and the loan obtained to facilitate the purchase does not show as income hence the loss shown on the income and expenditure account. In addition, the loan features on the balance sheet but the playground is not included as an asset as only current assets are shown resulting in a net liability. The Clerk also advised that the internal audit was almost complete and that the 2023/24 Annual Internal

Audit report and Annual Governance and Accountability Return would be considered at the June 2024 parish council meeting. The 2023/24 Annual Accounts were **agreed**.

24/62/PC Planning:

62.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

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

The Clerk advised that she had sent notice of application PL/24/1259/EIASR Land at Farnham Common Nursery, Crown Lane, Farnham Royal, SL2 3SF in connection with a proposed Integrated Retirement Community to all parish and unitary councillors. Tony Birkett noted that although the site is just outside the parish, the service road is accessed from Crown Lane which is within the parish and there are obvious green belt implications.

62.2 To note recent planning decisions

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

The Chairman advised that work had started again on the two new properties being built at the back of The Broadway car park on the land to the rear of Honey Cottage and The Brooms, Green Lane. Those present asked David Moore if he would ascertain the current position regarding access from John Reed at Buckinghamshire Council. He asked that all the relevant information was emailed to him.

24/63/PC Any Other Business (for information only)

63.1 Katherine Damsell advised that she would be bringing the updated performance management documents and updated Clerk's contract. to the July 2024 parish council meeting.

63.2 Jenny Quilter asked why the proposed double yellow lines were not installed in Beeches Road as since the new lines have been painted on Hawthorn Lane and Kingsway, the parking in Beeches Road is much worse. The Chairman advised that there were insufficient responses in support of the proposed lines for that aspect of the scheme to proceed.

63.3 The Clerk advised that she would like to obtain a quote from a local handyman to install the new blinds and put up some pictures in the office. Those present suggested obtaining details from the list on the Farnhams Community Facebook group.

63.4 Those present felt that whilst appointments had been made at the meeting the Clerk should ask Clive Robinson whether he would like any of the roles as it was felt councillors would be happy to facilitate any requests.

24/62/PC Next parish council meeting:

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

The next meetings: Full Council on 24 June 2024 at 7.30pm at Farnham Royal Village Hall

Full Council on 22 July 2024 at 7.30pm at Farnham Common Village Hall

OPEN FORUM

None