

Information for the Meeting of the Parish Council on 23 September 2024

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

4.1 Update on Speeding Initiatives

- Community Speedwatch

The group continues to conduct sessions at two sites each week, subject to the weather. Since the activity started, the group has recorded 154 motorists who were found to be traveling over the prescribed speed threshold. Details below:

| <u>Site</u> | <u>Speeders</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Beaconsfield Road | 3 |
| Beeches Road | 4 |
| Collinswood Road | 124 |
| Farnham Lane | 11 |
| One Pin Lane | 10 |
| Parish Lane | 1 |
| Templewood Lane | 1 |

Of speeders recorded, the maximum speed on a 30mph road is 56mph with the average speed being 40mph. The maximum speed was recorded on Collinswood Road.

Of speeders recorded, the maximum speed on a 40mph road is 52mph with the average speed being 50mph. The maximum speed was recorded on Parish Lane.

Since the last parish council meeting, sessions have been held in Beeches Road and Collinswood Road. A huge thank you to the volunteers for supporting this safety initiative.

- Update on Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs

Both signs are moving around the parish. The first data download gave the following results at One Pin Lane, which has a speed limit of 30mph, from 9 May 2024 to 17 June 2024.

| <u>MPH</u> | <u>Vehicle Count</u> |
|------------|----------------------|
| 10 | 323 |
| 15 | 1,374 |
| 20 | 3,687 |
| 25 | 10,401 |
| 30 | 13,322 |
| 35 | 5,303 |
| 40 | 944 |
| 45 | 142 |

4.2 Update on The Farnhams' Neighbourhood Plan

The Plan was submitted to Buckinghamshire Council and they held the submission consultation between 18 July 2024 and 5 September 2024.

The Neighbourhood Planning Assistant at Buckinghamshire Council has advised that she hasn't compiled the comments yet but to give councillors a rough idea there weren't very many responses to the consultation. There have been internal comments from other teams at Buckinghamshire Council and there are a few from other consultation bodies. She will publish the responses at a later date, usually once the examination commences.

The next stage of the process is for Buckinghamshire Council to take the plan forward to an independent examination. Their timescale for this stage is currently about 2-3 months. The examiner will consider public comments and ensure the plan meets the basic conditions in the Localism Act and other relevant regulations.

If the plan passes independent examination, the next stage is a local referendum to see whether it has community support. If the neighbourhood plan is supported, Buckinghamshire Council will adopt it as part of local planning policy to assess planning applications in the neighbourhood area.

4.3 Meet Your Local Councillors session programme 2024/25

At a previous parish council meeting it was agreed that Meet Your Local Councillors sessions would continue and that at least two parish councillors would be present at all sessions. The dates are:

28 September 2024 – At Orchard Day
9 November 2024
11 January 2025
8 March 2025
10 May 2025
12 July 2025

Farnham Common Community Library have again agreed to host these events and the Parish Council thanks them for their support. All sessions will start at 10am except 28 September 2024, which starts at 12 noon.

4.4 Update on Remembrance Posies and attendance at Remembrance events 2024

It was not possible to purchase the usual posies to place on the war graves in St Mary's Churchyard. Following a discussion with Jenny Quilter, Vice Chair, it was agreed that small wreaths would be purchased instead this year at a slightly increased cost. Bob Milne usually places the posies on the war graves and will do the same this year.

Remembrance Sunday is on 10 November 2024 and Paul Rowley, Chair, will attend the service and lay the wreath on behalf of the parish council. All councillors are encouraged to join him for the service.

On Monday 11 November 2024, there will be a short service on Kingsway Green and Jenny Quilter, Vice Chair, will lay the wreath on behalf of the parish council. All councillors are encouraged to join her for the short service.

4.5 Update of Antisocial behaviour in footpaths FAR/6 and FAR/7 in Farnham Royal

The Clerk is still working with Buckinghamshire Council to obtain the necessary comfort regarding who will own the K Barriers and who will be responsible for ongoing maintenance, risk management and any future liabilities following installation.

In the meantime, the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner Community Fund opened for applications, so the Clerk was asked to submit a request for £2,000 to part fund the purchase and installation of the barriers. The Clerk will be notified of the decision on 30 September 2024. In addition, effected residents have raised £1,000 towards the costs. Once the Community Fund decision is known, an application will be made to the Beeches Community Board for the balance required.

4.6 Review of the Community Showcase

On Saturday 14 September 2024, 14 local organisations and groups came together to share their activities with each other and the wider community on Kingsway Green and The Broadway. During the two hours approximately 200 members of the community took the opportunity to find out what was available in our villages. Most groups recruited new members and/or new volunteers.

An email has been sent to those that participated seeking feedback and suggestions for future events.

4.7 Review of the use of @farnhamroyal-pc.gov.uk email addresses

At a previous parish council meeting it was agreed that councillors would use their @farnhamroyal-pc.gov.uk email addresses for all parish council business from 1 September 2024. If councillors are experiencing issues with accessing their accounts, please contact CST Limited on 01628 531400 and they will help you. Alternatively, Jenny Quilter has offered to see if she can help you. Please let the Clerk know once you are ready to receive emails to this address.

4.8 Update on Community Board Boundary Review

Buckinghamshire Council has undertaken a review of the Community Boards following the outcome of the Boundary Commission Review which reduces unitary council members from 147 to 97 together with some ward boundary changes. In addition, Buckinghamshire Council agreed to make savings as part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2024/25 to 2026/27 which result in a reduced total budget of £1m from 2025/26 which includes staffing, project funding and operational delivery costs.

Considering all these changes, a new model of eight Community Boards was recommended and will take effect from May 2025, immediately following the local elections. The parish will now be in the South East Bucks Board. This Board includes the following:

Burnham
Chalfont St Giles & Little Chalfont
Chalfont St Peter
Farnhams & Stoke Poges
Gerrards Cross & Denham
Beaconsfield
Iver

5 Claim received on behalf of Cllr. Clive Robinson

A verbal update will be provided at the meeting by Katherine Damsell and Tony Birkett.

6 Contracts:

6.1 To consider electricity supply contract

The current electricity supply contract arranged with Buckinghamshire Council ends on 30 September 2024. The necessary form has therefore been submitted to opt in to the Buckinghamshire energy supply contract from 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2027.

Indicative unit rates have been provided and are estimated using pre-tender information completed in August 2024 combined with closing wholesale energy prices from 4 September 2024. Additionally, Buckinghamshire Council have advised that rates are provided at a meter level, some meter rates will vary from others even on the same site due to several factors such as location and usage, the weighted average prices quoted are an average of all meter rates on contract (over 550 electricity and 320 gas meters).

| Utility | Oct 24 - Sept 25 Est Weighted Ave Price (p/kWh) | Oct 24 - Sept 25 Est Weighted Ave Price + CCL (p/kWh) |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Electricity (04/09/2024) | 22.286 | 23.061 |
| Gas (04/09/2024) | 6.340 | 7.115 |

Buckinghamshire Council strongly caveat these prices, as prices cannot be confirmed until purchasing of energy for the contract is concluded as prices change daily with market fluctuations.

With this new contract an admin fee will be introduced by Buckinghamshire Council. This is an annual fee that has been introduced to improve resources allocated to manage the energy supply contracts for schools and partners.

In the interest of transparency they have provided details in the table below:

| Electricity Meters | | |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| Tier | Annual Consumption Threshold (per meter) | Annual fee (up to) |
| Low | Less than 15,000 kWh per annum | £100 |
| Medium | 15,000 to 30,000 kWh per annum | £200 |
| High | 30,000 to 60,000 kWh per annum | £400 |
| Very High | More than 60,000 kWh per annum | £600 |

They have advised that the fees are comparable with energy brokers and are not for profit, rather the fee is for reimbursement of resources to administer the contract. Further information and confirmation of final fee rates will be given once the opt-in process has been completed.

The fee is tiered according to the annual consumption for each meter, with a capped maximum charge for each tier. This means that should more schools and partners join than has been forecast, then the admin fees will reduce accordingly. Annual consumption is based on the last 12 months historical data for each meter.

6.2 To note Insurance arrangements for 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2025

The Parish Council's insurance policy has renewed under the long term agreement with Hiscox Insurance Company Limited, which is in place until 30th September 2025. The renewal price was £1,907.61.

The Clerk is still reviewing the pros, cons and costs of amending cover to include assets such as streetlights and benches etc. Once this review is complete a recommendation will be made to the Parish Council.

6.3 Demonstration of new contract performance management process, agree roles and training dates

As previously agreed, Jenny Quilter, Katherine Damsell and the Clerk have been finalising the format of the new performance management reviews. Jenny Quilter will provide a brief demonstration and it will be necessary to agree which councillors are reviewing which contracts/assets.

7 To consider annual playground inspections and quotes for repairs at Farnham Park Playing Fields:

A copy of each of the inspections has been circulated to parish councillors separately.

Jenny Quilter and the Clerk have discussed the findings on site at both playgrounds with the maintenance contractor. A meeting to discuss the findings has been arranged for 26 September 2024 with the supplier of the playground in Farnham Common.

The following repairs have been highlighted at Farnham Park Playing Fields:

7.1 Basketball hoop surfacing

The report noted that there are trip hazards at the edges of the surface, that there are significant gaps (over 30mm) between the surface and the edging or between the joints in the surface, there is moderate damage to the surface and the surface is lifting at the edges and creating trip points. The inspector reported that the trip hazards and trip points should be removed and the surface and perimeter should be repaired together with the damaged areas of surfacing.

The Clerk contacted three potential suppliers. One quote of £410 plus VAT has been received and both other suppliers declined to quote.

7.2 Pinning down raised rubber matting

For some of the equipment, the edges of the grass mat surface are raised / lifting above the surrounding surface and gaps are opening between the grass mat tiles. The inspector recommended that the edges are tucked in or pinned as per the API Code of Practice to remove trip hazards A quote of £94 plus VAT has been received.

7.3 Remove graffiti, replace bolt covers and tighten fixings

For some of the equipment bolt covers are broken or missing, fixings need tightening and graffiti needs removing. A quote of £84 plus VAT has been received. It will also be necessary to order some bolt covers at minimal cost.

7.4 HIC testing equipment surfaces

The inspection highlighted that the grass mats are silted up and the soil is compacted, which may have an effect on the impact absorbing properties of the surface. It was recommended that consideration is given to HIC testing the surface to verify impact attenuating properties. A quote of £495 plus VAT has been received.

8 Consultations

8.1 Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system

On 8 July, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves, announced that the government would reform the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and consult on a new growth-focused approach to the planning system, including restoring mandatory housing targets, before the end of the July.

Angela Rayner, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, duly published the draft revised NPPF for public consultation on 30 July.

The consultation closes on Tuesday 24th September 2024 and can be found here: [Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system).

A copy of Buckinghamshire Council's briefing to Town and Parish Councils has been circulated to parish councillors separately together with a copy of O'Neill Homer's response.

Given the closing date of the consultation, it will be necessary to agree a response at the meeting.

8.2 Draft Buckinghamshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Buckinghamshire Council has launched a consultation on their draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. The consultation closes on 13 October 2024 and can be found here:

<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/planning/buckinghamshire-lcwip-consultation/>

A copy of Buckinghamshire Council's briefing to Town and Parish Councils has been circulated to parish councillors separately

9 Projects:

9.1 Woodlands and Open Spaces

- Woodland Management Plan

The draft plan is currently with the Forestry Commission Woodland Officer for Buckinghamshire. It will be necessary for the consultant preparing the plan to meet the Officer on site to discuss the plan and he will probably suggest a few alterations.

The consultant believes it should be ready to be launched at the Annual Parish meeting in March 2025 but this will depend whether the Forestry Commission and Rural Payments Agency are able to complete their work in time.

- Boundary Copse (on hold pending completion of Woodland Management Plan)

The Parish Council has been preparing to clear some of the upgrowth in order to open up the copse to create a better space for residents and visitors. Following an ecology report, it was recommended that work was put on hold until the Woodland Management Plan was in place. Given the estimated plan launch date it is anticipated that any work will take place during Autumn/Winter 2025/26.

- Community Orchard

The work to rejuvenate the Community Orchard is complete. Six trees were replaced together with all of the plaques. The ringfenced reserves will be used to settle the net cost of £1,500.

Whilst this work was being carried out, Mark Frater found that the Langley Bullace (plum) is missing so he has ordered a replacement tree, which will be planted in November/December this year.

- Kingsway Green

Three options have been identified and previously discussed. The public consultation will be launched on the Parish Council stand at Orchard Day on 28 September 2024. A voting box will be placed in the library and a poll will be posted in the Farnhams' Community Facebook group. The consultation will run for four weeks.

- Rectory Close flowerbeds (on hold pending decision on Kingsway Green)

It was previously discussed that these flowerbeds should be planted in the same way as the flowerbeds on Kingsway Green. This work is therefore on hold until a decision is made for Kingsway Green.

9.2 Community

- Traders' Association

David Moore will provide an update at the meeting.

- Residents' Association

David Moore will provide an update at the meeting.

- CCTV on The Broadway & Playgrounds

Tony Birkett obtained a baseline quote, which has been circulated to parish councillors separately. The businesses along The Broadway and local agencies support the initiative but the parish council does not have sufficient funds to progress the project at this time. David Moore will provide an update at the meeting.

9.3 Contracts

- Protection of Green Spaces

Katherine Damsell prepared a schedule of the green spaces that the Parish Council either owns or leases with a view to understanding the terms of occupation and ensuring they are protected for future generations. BP Collins have provided some advice and possible actions depending on how the green space is held by the Parish Council and whether it is registered land. This advice will be reviewed and recommendations will be put to the Parish Council in due course.

9.4 Highways

- Dropped Kerbs

The report prepared by Clive Robinson was forwarded to Buckinghamshire Highways and it is understood that due to other financial pressures no real progress has been made. The most pressing kerbs will be discussed at the next meeting with the Buckinghamshire Highways' Local Area Technician.

10 Community Engagement/Events:

10.1 Orchard Day

The rota for the Parish Council stand is complete and produced below:

| | 11:00-12:00 FRPC Stand Set-up | 12:00-13:00 Event Open | 13:00 – 14:00 Event Open | 14:00-15:00 Event Open | 15:00-16:00 Event Open | 16:00-17:00 FRPC Stand Pack-Away |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Tony Birkett | | | | | | |
| Katherine Damsell | | | | | | |
| Bob Milne | | | | | | |
| Jenny Quilter | | | | | | |
| Paul Rowley | | | | | | |
| David Moore | | | | | | |

10.2 Christmas Arrangements

Jenny Quilter is proposing that in addition to the Christmas lights, the parish council arrange a 'Design a Christmas Bauble / Christmas Jumper' competition. Jenny Quilter will provide further information at the meeting.

11 Finance:

11.1 Spending Decisions

- To consider the annual flagpole service

At the last meeting, Jenny Quilter was asked to review whether it was necessary to service the flagpoles annually.

Jenny Quilter has reviewed the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998 and has confirmed that the service should be conducted annually. A quote of £726.02 plus VAT has been received from the supplier of the flag poles.

- To consider replacement heads for three streetlights

The annual check has been carried out by the contractor and the following streetlights need new heads:

Parsonage Lane (junction with Farnham Park Lane)

Kemsley Chase (first in road)

Blackpond Lane (junction with Green Lane)

In addition, one of the streetlights on Blackpond Lane (outside 1 Beaconsfield Villas) is leaning but the contractor has reported it is stable. They will check it regularly.

- To consider annual cut of hedge around the perimeter of Temple Dell

Having reviewed the maintenance contract with the contractor, it is agreed that the maintenance of the perimeter hedge is not included. The hedge needs cutting and a quote of £500 plus VAT has been received.

- To consider siding out path from car park to playground at Farnham Common Sports Club

During a recent visit to Farnham Common playground, it was noted that the footpath from the car park to the playground would benefit from siding out to maximise the width of the footpath. A quote of £168 plus VAT has been received. This includes removing the spoil from site.

- To consider securing three posts used for the mobile vehicle activated signs

When the contractors surveyed the posts as part of starting their contract for moving the signs and downloading the data, they advised that one post needs to be reconcreted and two need to be secured into their sockets. A quote of £204 plus VAT has been received.

11.2 To consider payments and note receipts, as per the September 2024 cashbook

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

12 Planning:

12.1 To ratify informal decision to appoint O'Neill Homer to provide advice regarding Allerds Farm

On 9 July 2024, the majority of parish councillors agreed (by email) to instruct O'Neill Homer at a cost of £475 plus VAT to provide advice regarding PL/24/1720/PIP - Land To The North Of Allerds Farm, Crown Lane, Farnham Royal, Buckinghamshire, SL2 3SF. This informal decision must be ratified at a full parish council meeting.

12.2 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

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

12.3 To note recent planning decisions

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