

FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 7.30 P.M. AT FARNHAM ROYAL VILLAGE HALL, FARNHAM LANE, FARNHAM ROYAL, SL2 3AX

Present

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

PC Oscar Blunt and PCSO Angela O'Connell from the Burnham, Farnhams and Taplow Neighbourhood Policing Team

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.

24/89/PC Apologies for absence

None

24/90/PC Declarations of Interest

None

24/91/PC To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2024

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

24/92/PC Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda - for information only)

92.1 Update on Speeding Initiative

92.1.1 Community Speedwatch

The content of the report was noted.

92.1.2 Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs

The content of the report was noted.

92.2 Update on The Farnhams' Neighbourhood Plan

The content of the report was noted.

92.3 Meet Your Local Councillors session programme 2024/25

The content of the report was noted.

92.4 Update on Remembrance Posies and attendance at Remembrance events 2024

The content of the report was noted.

92.5 Update on Antisocial behaviour in footpaths FAR/6 and FAR/7 in Farnham Royal

The content of the report was noted.

92.6 Review of the Community Showcase

The content of the report was noted.

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

The content of the report was noted and a discussion followed regarding the most efficient way of accessing individual email accounts. It was suggested that parish councillors add their account to their existing Outlook applications.

92.8 Update on Community Board Boundary Review

The content of the report was noted and the Chairman advised that he had written to South Bucks Association of Local Councils to raise concerns that the purpose of the Community Boards, especially after recent changes, is no longer what was intended when they were created.

24/93/PC Claim received on behalf of Cllr. Clive Robinson

Katherine Damsell confirmed that the parish council's insurers had appointed Clyde & Co to deal with the claim and therefore BP Collins' appointment had been terminated and final invoices had been received. She continued that a three month stay had been agreed with Cllr. Robinson's solicitors and the Clerk was in the process of collating and sending various documents noted in the claim to Clyde & Co for review. Finally, she advised that she and the Clerk had met with Clyde & Co on 6 September 2024 where they were asked to briefly discuss each of the individuals noted in the claim, excluding Cllr. Robinson. The discussion centred around their present status, availability, and their willingness/ability to be interviewed in case Clyde & Co decide they need further background information. The age and fragility of some of the individuals were noted. Clyde & Co suggested that the parish council make Cllr. Dev Dhillon and former parish councillor Richard Thomas aware of the claim and the potential interview request as they are noted in the document. Other named former parish councillors may be contacted in due course but it was stressed that any interviews would focus specifically on the claim received against the parish council.

24/94/PC Contracts:

94.1 To consider electricity supply contract for 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2027

The content of the report was noted and it was **agreed** that the parish council should opt in to the Buckinghamshire energy supply contract from 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2027. The Chairman asked which admin fee would apply and the Clerk advised that this had not been confirmed by Buckinghamshire Council but given it is based on annual consumption those present felt it would be either the low or medium tier so up to £100 or up to £200 per year. The Chairman also asked what the annual cost would be and Katherine Damsell advised that this would not be known until the purchasing of energy for the contract is concluded by Buckinghamshire Council. She drew his attention to the estimates provided in the report.

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

The insurance arrangements were **noted** including that this was the last year of a three year agreement.

94.3 Demonstration of new contract performance management process, agree reviewers and training dates

Jenny Quilter demonstrated the new online performance management review forms and those present thanked her for her efforts in creating the process and associated forms.

It was **agreed** that Bob Milne would review the work required under the Woodlands & Grasslands contract and the St Mary's Churchyard contract. It was also **agreed** that Paul Rowley would review the work required under the sections of the physical assets contract that relate to Farnham Common playground, the outdoor gym equipment and the playground at Farnham Park Playing Fields.

There was then a discussion about the best way of grouping the other assets in the physical assets contract such as defibrillators, flag poles and noticeboards etc. and whether geographical location would be better than asset type. It was **agreed** that Jenny Quilter would take this away and come back with a suitable proposal.

24/95/PC To consider annual playground inspections and quotes for repairs at Farnham Park Playing Fields:

95.1 Basketball hoop surfacing

The content of the report was noted and Amersham Town Council's quote of £410 plus VAT was **agreed**.

95.2 Pinning down raised rubber matting

The content of the report was noted and Amersham Town Council's quote of £94 plus VAT was **agreed**.

95.3 Remove graffiti, replace bolt covers and tighten fixings

The content of the report was noted and Amersham Town Council's quote of £84 plus VAT was **agreed**.

95.4 HIC testing equipment surfaces

The content of the report was noted and The Play Inspection Company's quote of £495 plus VAT was **agreed**.

Jenny Quilter confirmed that the broken gate at Farnham Park Playing Field had already been fixed and that a quote had been requested for the inspection of the cable runway that had been recommended in the report.

Jenny Quilter advised that a meeting had been arranged with the supplier of the playground at Farnham Common as some of the issues raised would be covered under the warranty. Concerns were raised by some of those present about the double gate as they queried its purpose and how it works. Jenny Quilter advised that a padlock should be fitted to one side leaving the other side for pedestrian access.

Jenny Quilter noted that the inspection report raised concerns over the condition of the surface under the outdoor gym equipment. Amersham Town Council were asked for ideas to repair the surface but they felt that as the equipment probably only has another 12-18 months of useful life it would be uneconomical to do very much given that the surface was recorded as low risk. They did offer to move the equipment to the other side of the concrete pad which appears to be in a better condition.

Jenny Quilter advised that during the recent site meeting with Amersham Town Council to review the Annual Inspection Report, they expressed their surprise that the posts for the original sections of the fence, which were reused for the new playground, have not been mentioned in the report as they are at eye level for children and have sharp corners. They and Jenny Quilter are investigating whether there are any caps that could be retrofitted to reduce the risk. She also advised that she planned to ask Proludic for any ideas during the site visit with them later in the week.

24/96/PC Consultations

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

Tony Birkett asked whether parish councils have to reply to the consultation. The Chairman advised that it had been strongly recommended to him.

The Chairman advised that he and the Clerk had met online with Cllr. Dev Dhillon, Cllr. David Moore and Cllr. Thomas Hogg of Buckinghamshire Council and Leani Haim and Matthew Jennings of O'Neill Homer to discuss the implications of the proposed changes. As part of that discussion O'Neill Homer had agreed to provide the parish council with a copy of their response to the consultation. Following this Katherine Damsell and the Clerk had prepared an initial discussion document based on the parish council's stated principles and relevant comments in O'Neill Homer's response.

Those present felt the document covered the relevant points except the Chairman asked for a statement to be included that the parish council would not want to see the reintroduction of a duty to co-operate with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities and Jenny Quilter suggested the removal of a paragraph in section two to avoid any confusion.

The statement was then **agreed** and the Chairman asked the Clerk to circulate it by email to those present at the meeting so any other comments could be raised before it was submitted.

96.2 Draft Buckinghamshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Those present felt that the plan contained nice words and good ideas but were sceptical of its impact on the parish. Bob Milne advised that he planned to reply personally to record his concern that joint cycle and pedestrian pathways are dangerous.

Following a brief discussion, it was **agreed** that the Clerk would just acknowledge receipt of the Plan.

24/97/PC Projects Update:

97.1 Woodlands and Open Spaces

97.1.1 Woodland Management Plan

The content of the report was noted.

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

The content of the report was noted.

97.1.3 Community Orchard

The content of the report was noted.

97.1.4 Kingsway Green

The content of the report was noted and Bob Milne express surprise at the quotes received so the Clerk agreed to send him a copy.

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

The content of the report was noted.

97.2 Community

97.2.1 Traders' Association

David Moore advised that he plans to engage with the businesses along The Broadway when he reviews the success of the six month free parking trial.

97.2.2 Residents' Association

David Moore advised that he had been unable to take this further but would put some proposals together.

97.2.3 CCTV on The Broadway & Playgrounds

David Moore advised that he had applied, on behalf of the parish council, for £5,000 towards the cost of this project from the Thames Valley Police Community Safety Fund. The Clerk expressed that, from memory of the terms and conditions, only one application could be accepted from an organisation within a twelve month period so it will be necessary to wait and see if either this or the K barrier application are successful.

97.2.4 Car parking

Bob Milne asked whether the terms of the agreement with Buckinghamshire Council had been approved. Tony Birkett advised that he was still waiting for the Memorandum of Understanding from Buckinghamshire Council. David Moore offered to chase the relevant officer to progress this and Tony Birkett agreed to send the contact details to him.

There was then a discussion as to whether the cost to the parish council would increase if usage of the car park increased. Tony Birkett advised that the cost would be fixed for the six month trial.

97.3 Contracts

97.3.1 Protection of Green Spaces

The content of the report was noted and the Chairman clarified that this potential project started with the idea of registering a covenant to protect the land a Farnham Common Sports Club but had been widened out to review/improve the protection of all the green spaces in the parish. Katherine Damsell advised that she anticipated reviewing the advice received from BP Collins during October 2024 and would come back to the October 2024 parish council meeting.

97.4 Highways

97.4.1 Dropped Kerbs

The content of the report was noted and Tony Birkett confirmed that he would continue to raise this issue with the Local Area Technician for Buckinghamshire Council.

24/98/PC Community Engagement/Events:

98.1 Orchard Day

The content of the report was noted and those present confirmed they would be in attendance in accordance with the rota circulated.

98.2 Christmas Arrangements

Jenny Quilter advised that having thought long and hard she had come to the conclusion it would not be sensible for the parish council to commit to arranging a Christmas event due to the small number of parish councillors who are able to help with the organisation and on the day of the event. She therefore proposed that the parish council would arrange the Christmas lights and Christmas tree as usual and would hold a

'Design a Christmas Bauble' or 'Design a Christmas Jumper' competition broken down into various age groups. This suggestion was **agreed**. The Chairman added that cards would be sent to residents in care homes as usual.

24/99/PC Finance:

99.1 Spending Decisions

99.1.1 To consider the annual flagpole service

The content of the report was noted and Jenny reiterated that an annual service was required. The quote from Flagmakers of £726.02 plus VAT was **agreed**.

99.1.2 To consider replacement heads for three streetlights

The content of the report was noted and the quote from Leigh (Electrical) of £360 plus VAT per head making £1,080 plus VAT in total was **agreed**.

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

The content of the report was noted and the quote from Amersham Town Council of £500 plus VAT was **agreed**.

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

The content of the report was noted and the quote from Amersham Town Council of £168 plus VAT was **agreed**.

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

The content of the report was noted and the quote from Amersham Town Council of £204 plus VAT was **agreed**.

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

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

24/100/PC Planning:

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

The appointment of O'Neill Homer was **ratified**.

100.2 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

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

100.3 To note recent planning decisions

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

24/101/PC Any Other Business (for information only)

101.1 Katherine Damsell advised that she would be out of action, for personal reasons, during the first two weeks of October 2024.

101.2 Katherine Damsell advised that she would work with the Clerk to progress actions relating to the Farnham Royal Relief in Sickness Charities ready to provide an update at the October 2024 parish council meeting.

101.3 Bob Milne asked when the D Day flags were being taken down. Jenny Quilter advised that they had very recently been removed.

24/102/PC Next parish council meetings:

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Full Council on 28 October 2024 at 7.30pm at Farnham Common Village Hall

Finance Committee on 11 November 2024 at 7.30pm at Farnham Common Village Hall

Full Council on 25 November 2024 at 7.30pm at Farnham Royal Village Hall

OPEN FORUM

PCSO Angela O'Connell introduced PC Oscar Blunt and then read the following statement:

Burglaries

We have Five Burglaries in the Burnham area this month, three in Farnham common and two in Taplow and Dorney. One male has been arrested.

Now that the nights are drawing in please remember to use timers when going out to ensure your house is not in darkness.

Are you a member of the Neighbourhood watch? If not, we greatly recommend you join. The NHW aims to make you be, and feel safer, within your community. As a member you can benefit from discounts on security devices and receive newsletters with expert crime prevention advice. Find out more at www.ourwatch.org.

Theft from motor Vehicles

This month there has been one report of theft in Burnham, two in Farnhams and two in the taplow area. The neighbourhood team are continuing with crime reduction work around these locations and reminding people to not leave valuables in their vehicles.

Theft of vehicles

Again we have seen one report for the Farnhams, three in taplow and two in the Burnham area. Please see our website for crime reduction advice around keyless car thefts.

Shoplifting

After reports of shoplifting on the High Street in Burnham, we have further arrested a prolific shoplifter. The neighbourhood team are continuing to work towards a community behaviour order for this individual.

We have successfully launched the Disc App in Farnham Common and Burnham which in essence is a free app for all shops and businesses to download which allows them to report incidents through the app rather than calling 101. There is also a feature on the app which have all known local offenders listed with pictures so that when reports are made they can be directly linked with the suspect. The feedback that we were having from local shops was that the 101 reporting process was taking too long and they did not have enough time to do it, so by using the new Disc app it cuts out all waiting time reporting and can be done straight away.

So far we have 10 shops and pubs/restaurants added to the app in the Farnham Common and Burnham area and the feedback is great so if anyone else would like to join please contact your local Neighbourhood team.

Burnham Park & High Street – Antisocial Behaviour

The NH team have been dealing with individuals using E-Scooters around the Burnham area, over the summer we have issued five warnings and stopped and seized a moped for no insurance. Please remember that E-scooters are illegal to use and you are at risk of having them seized if seen

Parcel Thefts

We have had a rise in parcel theft in Farnham Common and Burnham. Please remember these Top Tips

- *Have packages delivered to where you are, not where you aren't.*
- *Consider having packages delivered to your office or place of employment instead of your home.*
- *Use tracking numbers and delivery notifications. Most major shipping companies offer this service, and can send you a text or email when your package arrives.*
- *Ask family, trusted neighbours and friends to accept delivery on your behalf.*
- *Request packages to be placed in a safe place such as behind a bin or side door, or invest in a parcel locker.*
- *Many companies allow you to select date and time for delivery so you can ensure you are at home.*
- *Install a security camera*
- *Request signature on delivery*
- *Some companies can deliver to locker services or collection at post offices or distribution centres.*

Keep an eye out for suspicious vehicles/persons in your neighbourhood and report via the non-emergency number 101 or online via the Thames Valley Police Website.

Also please be aware of identity theft where criminals will order packages to your home address. If you receive a package you did not order please contact the courier direct.

Knife Crime

Stay True to you – Knife Crime Awareness Training

A free Online information session on knife crime and how to keep young people safe is available to all parents/carers across the Thames Valley is taking place online from 6.30-8.30pm on Wednesday 25th September. This is being run by the Ben Kinsella Trust, to find out more go to www.staytruetoyou.co.uk.

Tony Birkett asked whether residents could submit pictures of vehicles parked on the zig zag lines at either end of The Broadway to the police for further action. PCSO O'Connell advised that this was not possible and PC Blunt added that because it was a points offense it had to be seen by the police officer issuing the penalty notice.

Tony Birkett advised that he could provide the contact details for the businesses along The Broadway to the team so they could register them on the Disc App. PCSO O'Connell advised that the businesses had to register themselves.

Tony Birkett updated the team that he had obtained a baseline quote for a CCTV system and confirmed that the parish council was looking at local solutions.

Tony Birkett asked whether the team had recruited any more police officers. PCSO O'Connell confirmed they had one more who would cover the whole area.

PCSO O'Connell asked whether there had been any progress with the installation of the K barriers on footpaths FAR/6 and FAR/7. The Clerk advised that she had applied to the Thames Valley Police Community Safety Fund for part funding and was waiting for a decision before applying to the Beeches Community Board. The Chairman added that there was still some clarification required from Buckinghamshire Council regarding ownership, maintenance and future risk management.

The Chairman asked whether there had been any increase in crime reporting following a two page article in the latest edition of the Farnhams Magazine. PCSO O'Connell advised that she had not noticed much of a difference but stated that could be because there was nothing to report.