

## Information for the Meeting of the Parish Council on 27 January 2025

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

#### 4.1 Update on road safety initiatives (Community Speedwatch & MVAS)

The group continues to conduct sessions at two sites each week, subject to the weather. Since the activity started in July 2023, the group has recorded 207 motorists who were found to be traveling over the prescribed speed threshold. Details below:

Location	Speeders	
Beaconsfield Road	4	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. The maximum speed on a 40mph road is 52mph with the average speed being 50mph. The maximum speed was recorded on Parish Lane. In addition, we have been notified that two of the vehicles reported did not have a MOT, two were not taxed and one had a statutory off road notification (SORN).
Beeches Road	5	
Collinswood Road	173	
Farnham Lane	13	
One Pin Lane	10	
Parish Lane	1	
Templewood Lane	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>	

The volunteers have requested a floor standing sign that can be placed next to them when they are carrying out a session so that residents know what they are doing. The following signs have been identified and the steel A frame sign is their preferred option.



Eco Swinger Sign  
£109.16 inc. VAT



Steel A Frame Community Sign  
£154.02 inc. VAT

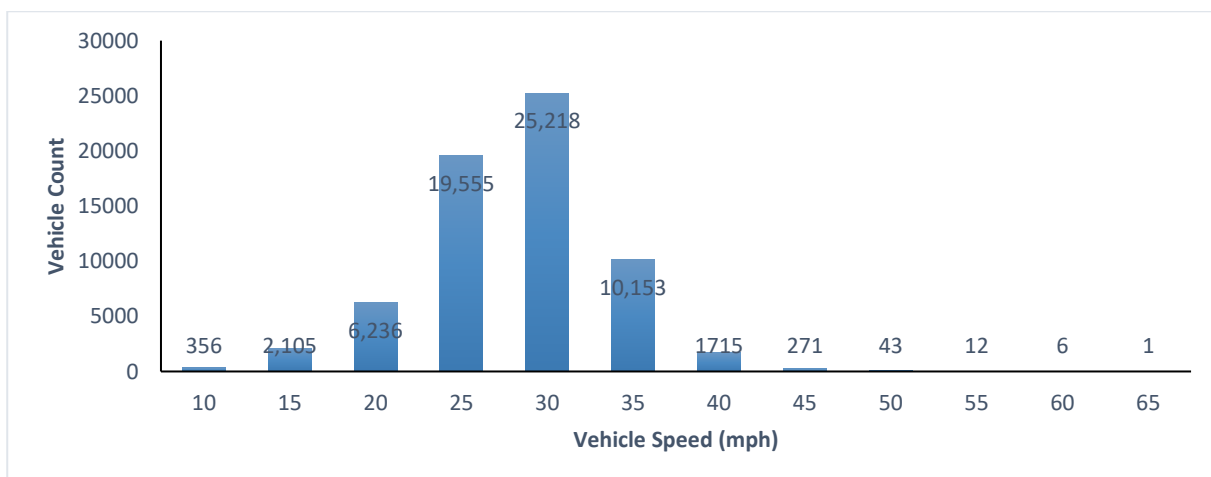
It is not possible to make a formal decision for an item under 'Matters Arising' but it would be useful to understand the views of parish councillors.

A huge thank you to the volunteers for supporting this safety initiative.

#### - Update on Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs

Both signs are moving around the villages to remind road users to slow down but also to record speed and volume data, which will be shared with Buckinghamshire Highways and the Police when discussing road safety and traffic calming initiatives.

The last data download for 2024 provided the following results on One Pin Lane, a 30mph road, from 23 September 2024 to 7 November 2024.



#### 4.2 Update of antisocial behaviour in footpaths FAR/6 and FAR/7 in Farnham Royal

The suggestion of forming a Residents' Association was not taken forward and the Clerk was asked to find out if the Rights of Way Team at Buckinghamshire Council would repair the existing stiles on footpaths FAR/6 and FAR/7 as it was felt this would negate the need to install K Barriers.

Just before Christmas, Sophia Comer of the Beeches Community Board was able to confirm that the Rights of Way Team had advised her that they would be willing to replace the old kissing gate on FAR/6, (the most northerly of the entrances on Blackpond Lane) with a new DDA compliant kissing gate. She is currently waiting for a timeline for this. The Clerk is also waiting for a response from the Rights of Way Team regarding whether they will repair the existing stiles.

#### 4.3 Update on Buckinghamshire Council's Agreement for free parking sessions in The Broadway car park

The agreement was signed with Buckinghamshire Council on 13 January 2025. This sees the creation of a new 30 minute free parking period, Monday to Saturday, initially for a six month trial period starting on Monday 3 February 2025.

The following statement, previously approved by parish councillors, will appear in the March edition of the Farnhams Magazine and will shortly be displayed in the noticeboards and on the parish council's website and Facebook page (shared with the Farnhams Community Facebook group).

*'Following representations from residents and local business owners and employees, the Parish Council began discussions with Buckinghamshire Council to investigate whether it would be possible for free parking to be reinstated.*

*An agreement was reached with Buckinghamshire Council in January 2025 which saw the creation of a new 30 minute free parking period, Monday to Saturday, initially for a six month trial period. A ticket must still be obtained either through Ringo or from the machine, in which case it must also be displayed.*

*As with most things in life, this new facility comes at a cost and the Parish Council are required to pay Buckinghamshire Council an estimated £20,900 per year to cover Buckinghamshire Council's loss in revenue and the cost of updating the ticket machine. The Parish Council will use funds already held to settle the payment for the trial period and, if extended, until March 2026 but wants to be open and transparent that the payments due in future years may impact the precept charged to households as part of their council tax.*

*Clearly, a payment of this amount represents a significant proportion of the Parish Council's annual income and the Parish Council will be using various metrics to calculate the success of this initiative for both residents and businesses. It must be understood by all stakeholders that this 30 minute free parking provision is a trial and if the initiative is not of sufficient benefit to residents and businesses the facility will not be renewed. The facility may also not be renewed if the amount charged by Buckinghamshire Council significantly increases year on year.*

*It is hoped that by providing a free parking period, residents and visitors will be encouraged to use the shops and businesses in The Broadway, which will result in an increase in activity. In addition, it is hoped that on street parking in the roads surrounding The Broadway will be reduced improving the flow of traffic and pedestrian safety.'*

It is now necessary for the parish council to agree the various metrics that will be used to calculate the success of this initiative. It should be noted that if the trial is deemed unsuccessful, notice to discontinue the free sessions will need to be given to Buckinghamshire Council by 31 May 2025. If notice is not given by this date, a new twelve month minimum period will begin lasting until 31 July 2026.

#### 4.4 Update on Kingsway Green and Rectory Close flower beds

Katherine Damsell and the Clerk met with the contractor as he had concerns about the proposed shape of the flower beds along the front of the green. Due to the placement of manhole covers it would not be possible to curve them both around the corners as agreed and curving one but not the other would look odd. He therefore recommended changing the design to oval beds to match the central bed at the back of the green next to the service road. The design will now look as follows:



Planting will start in early March 2025 as soon as the selected varieties are available in the nurseries. Prior to this he will provide a plant list, which will be circulated to parish councillors for information.

He will also shortly start work on the flower beds and shrub bed on the corner of Rectory Close in Farnham Royal.

All works are due to be completed before the end of March 2025.

#### 4.5 Update on Thames Water issues in Farnham Common

Jenny Quilter has advised that the snow at the beginning of January 2025 caused waste water flooding again in certain areas of Farnham Common. After contact from Jenny Quilter and Joy Morrissey MP, Thames Water attended with a suction tanker and cleared the immediate problem but it is felt that Thames Water must still be held to account to deliver on the potential solutions discussed at previous community meetings.

#### 4.6 Update on Design a Christmas Bauble competition

This proved to be a very popular competition with 192 entrants coming from the Farnham Common Village Schools, St Mary's Farnham Royal CofE Primary School and Farnham Common Library. Winners received a £50 gift voucher, second place received a £25 gift voucher and Chairman's Choice received a £10 gift voucher. 19 prizes totalling £450 were awarded and additional costs of £220.54 were incurred mostly in respect of post boxes and a roll up banner, all of which can be reused for other purposes.

Under 4 years old - Winner



Under 4 years old - Second Place



4 – 7 years old - Winner



4 – 7 years old - Second Place



8 – 11 years old - Winner



8 – 11 years old - Second Place



8 – 11 years old - Second Place



12 – 17 years old - Winner



Adult - Winner



As you can see, the standard was very high, so high in fact that the Chairman awarded ten extra Chairman's Choice prizes.



## 5 Cllr. Clive Robinson v Farnham Royal Parish Council

### 5.1 Update on claim

Katherine Damsell will provide a verbal update at the meeting.

### 5.2 To consider appointing a Legal Committee

The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (formerly BALC) have advised that, going forward, it would be sensible for the parish council to appoint a committee to deal with the claim and to report back to the full parish council when something substantial occurs.

### 5.3 To determine, if appointed, the Legal Committee's terms of reference and appoint members

If a committee is appointed, the committee's members will be appointed at the meeting and the terms of reference will be determined.

## 6 Contracts

### 6.1 To consider subscribing to Scribe for accounting software

At the last parish council meeting, Katherine Damsell advised that she and the Clerk had taken part in an impressive demonstration of the Scribe accounting package, which she felt would streamline the parish council's accounting processes and would help with the Business Continuation Plan currently being written. She and the Clerk have now visited Great Missenden Parish Council, who have been using the package for c. five years.

Katherine Damsell is preparing a paper regarding this item and this will be circulated to parish councillors separately.

## **7 Projects:**

### **7.1 Community**

#### **7.1.1 To consider arrangements for 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day & VJ Day**

This year marks 80 years since the end of the Second World War, with Victory in Europe Day on 8 May 1945 and Victory over Japan Day on 15 August 1945.

Tony Birkett is working to bring another fascinating exhibition and Q & A session to Farnham Common Community Library from Tuesday 6 May 2025.

It is proposed that the centres of both villages are decorated with flags and a quote of £2,280 plus VAT has been received. In addition, it is proposed that the parish council provides bunting to the businesses along The Broadway and in the centre of Farnham Royal. This approach was taken in 2022 for Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee when 50 nine metre packets of union jack bunting were provided to local businesses at a cost of £449.50 plus VAT. Paul Rowley, in his role as Co-Lead for Communities would deliver the bunting and offer to help them put it up.

It is proposed that the parish council hosts a parish picnic in Temple Dell on Sunday 11 May 2025 from 12pm to 4pm where the community can come together and enjoy the sounds of the 1940s from the Polka Dots. It is hoped that an ice cream van will attend and a few local organisations would be asked to help enhance the event with possibly a BBQ etc.

#### **7.1.2 To consider launching Community Champion Awards**

It is proposed that the parish council launches The Farnhams' Community Champion Awards to recognize individuals and organisations who have made a positive impact on The Farnhams. These annual awards would be a way to thank volunteers for their hard work and contribution.

The proposed categories are:

- Outstanding Community Champion
- Outstanding Volunteer
- Outstanding Young Person
- Outstanding Voluntary and Community Sector Organisation of the Year
- Outstanding Community Initiative of the Year

The community would be asked to nominate individuals and organisations ahead of the awards being given out at the Annual Parish Meeting. Winner could receive a certificate, an engraved glass award or a prize.

### **7.2 The Farnhams' Neighbourhood Plan**

#### **7.2.1 To consider the proposed Examiners for the Neighbourhood Plan**

Buckinghamshire Council has confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan is ready for the Examination Stage and have provided three potential examiners (via a third party provider) who are all independent of Buckinghamshire Council and Farnham Royal Parish Council. The Parish Council has been asked if it has a preference.

O'Neill Homer have forwarded their comments on the individuals proposed and these will be discussed at the meeting.

## **8 Consultations/Public Notices:**

### **8.1 Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England**

This government consultation seeks views on introducing a mandatory minimum code of conduct for local authorities in England, and measures to strengthen the standards and conduct regime in England to ensure consistency of approach amongst councils investigating serious breaches of their member codes of conduct, including the introduction of the power of suspension. The proposals would apply to parish councils.

This consultation, which consists of 40 questions, closes on 26 February 2025 and both the parish council as a body and parish councillors as individuals are invited to respond. If the parish council would like to respond, parish councillors are asked to review the questions and forward their responses to the Clerk by Friday 14 February 2025. The Clerk will then collate the responses and produce a summary for discussion at the February 2025 meeting so a response, on behalf of the parish council, can be agreed.

The consultation can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-the-standards-and-conduct-framework-for-local-authorities-in-england/strengthening-the-standards-and-conduct-framework-for-local-authorities-in-england>

### **8.2 English Devolution White Paper**

The government has issued the English Devolution White Paper which details the government's plan for devolving control to local communities. This is not a consultation but the Chairman wanted to ensure that all parish councillors and the wider community were aware of this paper.

A summary prepared by the South Bucks Association of Local Councils has been circulated to parish councillors separately.

A copy of the white paper can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

### 8.3 To consider the arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2024 that the Annual Parish Meeting for 2025 would be held on 31 March 2025 at Farnham Common Village Hall.

It is proposed that the format for the meeting will change this year. There will still be an update from the Neighbourhood Policing Team and reports from the parish council on financial matters, parish projects and parish initiatives but instead of a guest speaker it is proposed that community organisations are invited to have a stand so that they and residents can discuss opportunities in the parish over drinks and light refreshments.

It is noted that the meeting will take place during the pre-election period (Purdah) during which there are limitations on the publicity and information that Buckinghamshire Council can issue to ensure that this cannot be perceived as seeking to influence public opinion. During this time, a parish council must remain completely neutral and avoid any form of publicity referring to individual councillors or political parties and must ensure that there is no political bias at any council events. As such, it is proposed that there will not be a presentation from Buckinghamshire Council at this year's meeting.

It is proposed that Andy Webb is engaged to set up and manage the audiovisual equipment during the meeting and produce the session recordings for publication on the parish council's website after the meeting. It is not proposed to outsource catering this year. The Clerk and Katherine Damsell will purchase the relevant items and prepare the refreshments for the evening.

### 8.4 To consider arrangements for publicising the parish elections on 1 May 2025

An advert, taken from the toolkit provided by the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (formerly BALC), has been placed in the March edition of the Farnhams Magazine. In addition, the toolkit suggests inviting residents to join parish councillors for a short information event before two parish council meetings. The purpose of the event is for prospective candidates to drop in and learn more about becoming a parish councillor i.e. the role of a councillor and what a parish council does. You may have seen Burnham Parish Council's adverts on Facebook for their information events.

Given that nomination forms must be submitted by 2 April 2025, it is proposed that information events are held before the parish council meetings on 24 February and 24 March 2025.

In addition, posters can be placed on noticeboards and posts can be shared on the Farnhams Community Facebook Group.

## 9 Finance:

### 9.1 Finance Committee Recommendations

#### 9.1.1 To consider the December 2024 Management Accounts

The management accounts, including notes, have been circulated to councillors separately.

#### 9.1.2 To consider the 2025/26 Draft Budget

The draft budget was reviewed at the Finance Committee meeting held on 13 January 2024. The meeting agreed to recommend it to the parish council at its next meeting. A copy of the draft budget has been circulated to parish councillors separately.

#### 9.1.3 To consider the 2025/26 Precept

There will be a discussion at the meeting to agree the precept for 2025/26.

### 9.2 To consider payments and note receipts, as per the January 2025 cashbook

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

## 10 Planning:

### 10.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications

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

### 10.2 To note recent planning decisions

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