

Farnham Royal Parish Council apologises to Councillor Clive Robinson for the distress caused over the past 7 years following his referral to the Monitoring Officer of Buckinghamshire Council and by acting outside of its powers in removing him from his public roles.

Farnham Royal Parish Council acknowledges Councillor Clive Robinson's statements during the public meeting on 17 April 2018 were honestly made and did not bring the council into disrepute.

Although these minutes reflect the words spoken, the Council records (without prejudice to its own position) that in response to a challenge by Mr Robinson to the decision of the Deputy Monitoring Officer for Buckinghamshire Council, the High Court (Administrative Division) held on 20 July 2021 it was an infringement of Mr Robinson's right to freedom of speech to refer him to the Monitoring Officer complaints procedure and to find him guilty of a breach of the Farnham Royal Parish Council's Code of Conduct. A full copy of the court's reasoning is available at: [www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2021/2014.html](http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2021/2014.html)

## **FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL**

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FARNHAM ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2018 AT 7.30 P.M. IN FARNHAM ROYAL VILLAGE HALL**

#### **Present**

Mr. Trevor Clapp (Chairman)	Mr. John Hodges
Mr. Bob Milne	Mr. Paul Rowley
Mr. Clive Robinson	Mr. Bill Baker
Mrs. Judy Tipping	Mr. Roger Home
Mrs. Marilyn Rolfe	Mr. Richard Thomas
Mrs. Vicky Thompson	Mrs. Hilda Holder – Clerk

Six members of the public. The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30pm. The meeting was adjourned for OPEN FORUM noted at the end of these minutes. The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

#### **18/36/PC Apologies for absence**

County Councillor Lin Hazell and Ralph Bagge, District Councillors Dev Dhillon, David Anthony and Marlene Lewis.

#### **18/37/PC To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

The minutes were **approved** and signed by the Chairman.

#### **18/38/PC Matters Arising (not covered on the agenda and for information only)**

There were none.

### **18/39/PC To agree a revised policy on illegal signage**

39.1 Mr. Robinson presented a revised policy document to the Council. **This was approved. It was also agreed to:-**

39.1.1 recommend to BCC that they gave approval to the signs put up during working hours on Tuesdays by the Grimsby Fish seller and

39.1.2 approve the signage put out by the Library provided it stayed within 0.2m of their fence and

39.1.3 limit the time during which the Rotary Club could put up their signs to two weeks whilst the crocuses were in flower.

39.2 In terms of the procedure for approval of charity signage **it was agreed** that these could follow a delegated authority procedure rather than having to come back to Council on each occasion provided that members were notified of each approval given and that no more than 4 signs in total could be allowed for each applicant.

39.3 **It was agreed** that an implementation procedure be adopted to notify stakeholders and known regular abusers of the signage policy in the village of our revised policy.

### **18/40/PC To consider a one-way scheme for Beeches Road**

Mr. Robinson, Mrs. Tipping and Mrs. Rolfe had prepared a consultation document regarding this. Mr. Home and the Clerk offered to help review and finalise the wording so as to clarify the need for the consultation and future steps which would include wider consultation and the involvement of BCC. **It was agreed** that when the weather was favourable the revised leaflet would be hand delivered to residents along the whole of Green Lane, Beeches Road and the Kingsway.

### **18/41/PC To consider preparing a report on all highways issues in the parish**

Mrs. Rolfe proposed that a more co-ordinated approach to improving highways issues should be developed and **it was agreed** that in principle this was a good idea to be pursued and brought back with firmer proposals to a future meeting.

### **18/42/PC To approve the expenditure necessary (not exceeding £4,000) to carry out a referendum of the parish to determine whether to increase the precept to provide 30 minutes free car parking at the Broadway Car Park**

42.1 Mrs. Rolfe sponsored this motion and it was explained that the issue had been the most popular one of the Parish Plan responses. SBDC had advised it would cost approximately £50,000pa to restore the free half hour parking and if agreed to subsidise this amount it would increase the amount each resident paid in tax towards the precept by a third.

42.2 The Chairman felt this should only be done on the basis of a referendum which if pursued professionally and with postage paid responses could cost up to £4,000. Members debated the relative cost of parking, the observation that the car park was always full so that issues with bad parking would persist, whether cheaper ways of canvassing local opinion were available, the positive effect on retail if the free parking was reintroduced and the effectiveness of the Farnhams Magazine.

42.3 **It was agreed** that Lucid should be asked to provide a quote to professionally prepare an online survey monkey questionnaire and an insert for the Farnhams Magazine. If the quote was less than £1,000 the project could be proceeded with otherwise it should be brought back to Council. It should be made clear that the Council needed at least a 50% response rate and a majority in favour.

### **18/43/PC To appoint a Data Protection Officer and steps to implement GDPR**

The Clerk explained the requirements for a Data Protection Officer under GDPR and that this could not be her but could be a councillor or a third party or business. **It was agreed** that Mr. Home be appointed as the Data Protection Officer with assistance from Mr. Rowley.

**18/44/PC To consider taking legal advice on new standing orders on the issue of how to proceed where councillors have disclosable financial interests**

The Clerk admitted to being confused by the requirements of the new Model Standing Orders issued by NALC on the issue of personal interests and **it was agreed** that she should meet with the Vice Chairman to clarify issues before the next meeting.

**18/45/PC To receive updates relating to Kingsway Green and to agree any action**

The Chairman, Mr. Baker, Mr. Rowley and the Clerk had met with the design contractor who would be producing three schemes within the next 6 weeks.

**18/46/PC Finance:**

46.1 Payments as per the cashbook circulated prior to the meeting were **approved** for payment. Receipts were noted as per the cashbook. Mr. Robinson asked why the full amount of match funding had been paid in respect of Footpath 4 when defects persisted but it was explained that we could not withhold payment to BCC as we were not the main contractor.

46.2 **It was agreed** to defer to the next meeting, when draft accounts for the last financial year should be available, the issue of reviewing the budget for 2018/19 and ring fencing reserves into special reserve funds.

46.3 Costs of dealing with rats on Temple Dell were **ratified**.

**18/47/PC Planning**

47.1 Planning comments submitted since the last meeting were **approved**. Mr. Milne expressed disapproval that insufficient parking provision existed for offices approved for conversion into flats. It was noted that Central government did not allow SBDC to set minimum parking standards.

47.2 Planning decisions were noted.

47.3 The Chairman reported that notes had been circulated for approval relating to the consultation meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> April. In summary, on the basis of pressure to develop certain areas of Green Belt (he referred to the ARUP report in this regard) the Parish Council had been approached by two developers asking for the Council to meet them and the consultation meeting had been called so as to ask residents how they wished the Council to handle these approaches. Residents present had voted that the Parish Council should not enter into any discussions with developers if the development related to Green Belt land but otherwise they were free to do so.

47.4 He added that terms of reference had been drafted for a Neighborhood Plan working group and an open meeting would be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May – most likely at Farnham Common Village Hall as unfortunately Farnham Royal Village Hall was not free - at which up to 50 people might attend.

**18/48/PC To approve a proposal for more Christmas lights**

**It was agreed** to defer this item to the next meeting.

**18/49/PC Any Other Business (for information only)**

49.1 Mrs. Tipping complained of the gullies still not having been cleaned in the Broadway and of the puddles and parking issues near to Broadway tyres. Mr. Homes said all these issues had been raised repeatedly with BCC.

49.2 Mr. Thomas raised the issue of the two rugby lights that by agreement FCSC were required to take down every year. He noted that there was a cost and health and safety issues associated with this for the Club and enquired whether any compromise might be possible. The Chairman

noted that this issue had been a fundamental part of the discussions at the time the lights were put in and it would be unfortunate if distress was caused by raising the subject again.

49.3 Mrs. Thompson advised the Council that she would be leaving the area in July for work reasons and that she would attend her last meeting in June. The Chairman commented that he would be sad to see her leave.

**18/50/PC To agree that in view of the confidential nature of the next business to be transacted that the public be instructed to withdraw**

This was agreed.

**18/51/PC To consider potential breach/es of the Code of Conduct**

51.1 The Clerk explained that she had taken the decision to include this item on the agenda as the usual procedure of calling a Conduct Committee meeting had been compromised by the very public nature of the alleged breach and the implications of the alleged breach on the reputation of members.

51.2 The Councillor had been written to about the alleged breach and his comments circulated to members before the meeting this evening. He had denied the allegations against him.

51.3 Following debate **it was agreed** by a majority of members that the councillor in question had brought the Parish Council into disrepute and was in breach of the Code of Conduct.

51.4 **It was agreed** that the Councillor in question would be invited to meet with a small number of Parish Councillors to discuss how best to resolve matters before 16<sup>th</sup> May when the agenda for the next meeting needed to be issued.

**18/52/PC Next meeting:**

The meeting closed at 10.05pm. The next meeting would be the Annual Meeting of the Council on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018 at 7.30pm at Farnham Common Village Hall.

**NOTES from the public open forum of the meeting**

Mr. Foulds thanked the Council for calling the Green Belt consultation meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> April. He noted an item in the local papers last week that Bucks is being required to build 90,000 new homes in 18 years. He managed Green Belt land and when there had been a call for sites no fewer than six developers contacted him. They had liked the approach of Berkeley Homes and they did not want to spoil the village but to give something back. The audience at the meeting had missed the point that his land would inevitably be built on one day and the ability to influence what we want was lost if we didn't speak to the developers.

Mrs. Tipping noted that more people attended than was anticipated and the village hall committee were looking into putting in a sound system.

Mr. Norvill thanked the Council for its hard work in arranging a successful meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> April.

*This concludes the meeting.*