

## WEST FARLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021 ON THE VILLAGE GREEN, WEST FARLEIGH

**PRESENT:** Cllrs M Moy, J Morgan, H Swan and Mrs A Broadhurst, Clerk  
One member of public

**1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies had been received.

**2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

**3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**3.1 Chairman**

Cllr Moy was nominated by Cllr Swan and seconded by Cllr Morgan. There being no other nominations and all Members being in agreement, Cllr Moy was duly elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year and completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**3.2 Vice-Chairman**

Cllr Morgan was nominated by Cllr Moy and seconded by Cllr Swan. There being no other nominations and all Members being in agreement, Cllr Morgan was duly elected as Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year.

**4. MINUTES of the Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

The Minutes of the meeting had been previously distributed and Cllr Morgan proposed that the minutes were a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour. The Chairman signed off the official copy.

**5. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

**5.1 Structure of Committees**

The following Committee arrangements were **Agreed** for the forthcoming year:

Community Centre Working Party – It was agreed that this would be disbanded as the majority of the Trustees are no longer Councillors.

Planning Committee – A minimum of any three Councillors – as available

**5.2 Appointment of Council Representatives**

The following appointments were made for the forthcoming year:

Tree Warden – Ed Boyd

Policing Meetings – As available (one Councillor can attend)

KALC Area Committee - Cllrs Moy and Swan

Highways meetings - as available

**6. FINANCE**

**6.1 Annual Return of Accounts and Audit 2020-2021**

The Clerk reminded all present that all documents relating to this agenda item had been previously circulated.

**6.1.1 Annual Accounts for 2020-2021**

It was proposed by Cllr Moy, seconded by Cllr Morgan “**that the Council’s Accounts should be Approved**”. This was Agreed by all present.

**6.1.2 Internal Audit Report**

The report had only highlighted two items that would require attention; however, one of these was repeated from the previous year’s issues. One concern was the low number of Councillors and the other was that the Parish Council currently only has two signatories. Having discussed the situation with regards to the lack of meetings and opportunities to co-opt with the Internal Auditor, he was aware that these are currently items that are out of the Parish Council’s control and will be

addressed during the coming year; as Government restrictions begin to lift. It was noted that the lack of signatories had not been an issue over the past year, as the Clerk had been able to complete telephone transfers, if cheques could not be signed.

### 6.1.3 Annual Governance Statement 2020-2021 (Section 1 of Annual Return)

Members considered the Statements of Assurance contained in Section 1 of the Annual Return and determined that the statements numbered 1 to 9 can all be answered "Yes". It was proposed by Cllr Swan, seconded by Cllr Morgan "that the Statement is Approved". This was Agreed by all present.

### 6.1.4 Accounting Statement 2020-2021 (Section 2 of Annual Return)

It was proposed by Cllr Moy, seconded by Cllr Swan "that the Statement of Accounts contained on Page 5 of the Annual Return should be Approved." This was Agreed by all present.

### 6.2 To note Budget Monitoring Report to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021

The Budget Monitoring Report was **Noted**.

### 6.3 To note the Income since March meeting

#### Income:

MBC Precept	£25,500.00
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### 6.4 To note the Expenditure since March meeting

It was proposed by Cllr Moy to approve the following transactions, this was seconded by Cllr Swan; with all in favour.

#### Cheques:

101291 – KALC – Annual Subscription	£ 277.58
101292 – Came & Company – Annual Renewal of Insurance	£ 389.77
101289 – Mrs A Broadhurst – Salary owed (April & May)	£ 170.64

#### Telephone Transfers

David Bucket (Internal Audit)	£275.00
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#### Standing Orders

Mrs A Broadhurst – April Salary (£60.32 owed)	£720.00
Mrs A Broadhurst – May Salary (£110.32 owed)	£720.00

#### Direct Debits

Pension (April)	£55.00
Pension (May)	£55.00

### 6.5 Renewal of Annual Insurance

The Clerk reminded all present that this was the final year in the 3-year contract with Came & Company. It was proposed by Cllr Moy to approve this year's insurance renewal at a cost of £389.77 (£303.37 + £50 fee + ITP tax £36.40). This was seconded by Cllr Morgan, with all in favour.

### 6.6 Kent Association of Local Councils Annual Subscription Renewal

It was proposed by Cllr Swan to renew the annual membership to the Kent Association of Local Councils, at a cost of £277.58 (£231.32 + vat). This was seconded by Cllr Morgan, with all in favour.

### 7. Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Emergency Powers

The Clerk explained the current situation with Central Government having ended virtual meetings for Parish Councils from the 7<sup>th</sup> May. This has caused a large amount of discussion between NALC, area ALCs and Town/Parish Councils across the country, as it is not yet deemed safe to be holding meetings face to face. After numerous discussions with KALC, the Clerk has been informed that there are two options available. One would be to post up an agenda, in the usual way, and then cancel the meeting before it takes place on Health & Safety grounds. This would result in no Parish Council business being progressed. The other option is that the Clerk continues with emergency delegated powers so that any work required can be actioned. Parish Council could still technically meet virtually, but to only make recommendations for the Clerk to action. The Councillors would be unable to approve agenda items in the normal way. The Clerk added that the system used ever since March 2020 has worked extremely well, with there being a full paperwork trail for every decision that has been made by the Council. It was noted that the Parish Council has just had an internal audit, which has not raised any concerns with this process.

The Clerk therefore asked that Councillors readopt the following statement, to continue the delegated powers:

In response to the Covid-19 outbreak in the UK and in the event that it is not possible to convene a meeting of the council in a reasonable time, the Clerk shall have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the council where such decisions cannot be reasonably deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline. This will be carried out where possible by consultation with members by electronic means or telephone. The clerk will further consult with the chairman for guidance as necessary. The delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved to the council in legislation or in its Standing Orders or Financial Regulations. Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in writing and must be published in accordance with the relevant regulations. This delegated authority ceases upon the first meeting of the council after the council meeting at which the delegation was put in place.

It was proposed by Cllr Moy that the required delegated powers be readopted for the Clerk, until meetings can return to normal. This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour.

It was then proposed by Cllr Moy that the Parish Council also makes the decision to not meet face to face indoors until all members of the Council have received both doses of the vaccination + 3 weeks. This was agreed by all present.

## **8. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

### **8.1 Post Covid-19 Lockdown Village Event**

Cllr Swan gave a brief update on the event plans, which include The Good Intent organising a bbq, an ice cream van, music from Pete & Co (who usually request a donation) and the Kettle Bridge Concertinas. It was agreed that it is important to support the pub, after such a difficult year, as they are the heart of the community and have always assisted the Parish Council, with supplying a meeting room. The Clerk asked whether additional toilets would be required and Cllr Swan said that she had details of a Company that can assist if needed. It was agreed that the date and time of the event should be agreed with the pub, but it was thought this would be one weekend afternoon in July. There was brief discussion regarding whether the landowner adjacent to the green, would give permission for the land to be used as an overflow area, if the event was very popular, and the Clerk offered to try to make contact with them to discuss this. **ACTION: Clerk**

### **8.2 Posts Required Around the Village Green**

Cllr Swan had inspected the posts around the green and there are 24 posts that will require replacing. The Clerk commented that the posts were approximately £35 each to supply and install. Cllr Swan queried whether the Parish Council should investigate changing to posts made from recyclable material. It was noted that these need a protective collar that the posts sit in and these may be easier to remove. It was proposed by Cllr Moy to set aside £900 to allow for 27 wooden posts to be ordered and installed by the Parish Council's grounds maintenance contractor (allowing for 3 spares).

## **9. PLANNING**

### **9.1 Planning Decisions**

#### **9.1.1 Applications Approved by MBC**

20/505544/FULL - 15 Charlton Lane

Demolition of a rear conservatory and erection of a single storey wrap around front, side and rear extension and a single storey front extension in line with the porch

20/505652/FULL - The Bothy, Ewell Lane

Erection of a detached single garage and home office

21/500917/FULL – Riverdale, St Helens Lane

Demolition of existing garage and erection of new garage with external staircase to first floor balcony.

#### **9.1.2 Applications Refused by MBC**

21/500217/FULL - Thatched House, Heath Road

Creation of a new replacement vehicular access, driveway and turning area, including change of use of land to residential.

Councillors were disappointed to see that this application had been refused and suggested that a letter of support be sent to the Planning Inspector, if the applicant decides to lodge an appeal.

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 at 10.30am on the Village Green.\*

*\* As highlighted in agenda item 7, the Parish Council will not return to full (indoor) Parish Council meetings until all members of the Parish Council are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. This meeting is being arranged for co-option of a new Councillor and to receive any update on the village event planned for July 2021.*

With no further matters to discuss, the meeting was closed at 11.35am.