

WEST FARLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 21st MARCH 2022 IN BRAMLEY BARN, WEST FARLEIGH

PRESENT: Cllrs M Moy, H Swan, B Scott, and Mrs A Broadhurst, Clerk
5 members of public

1. Apologies

Cllr J Morgan, Cllr C Wilson, County/Borough Cllr S Webb

2. Councillor Declarations

No interests declared.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th January 2022

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

4. FINANCE

4.1 To note Budget Monitoring Report to 28th February 2022

The Budget Monitoring Report was **Noted**.

4.2 To note the Income since January meeting

No income received.

4.3 To note the Expenditure since January meeting

The Clerk reported that Cllr Scott had purchased the oak required to repair the fingerpost sign, which had been discussed at the January meeting. Due to Cllr Morgan giving apologies for the meeting, the Clerk asked Councillors to approve for Cllr Scott to be one of the two signatures on cheque no 101308. This was agreed by all present.

It was proposed by Cllr Swan to approve the following transactions, this was seconded by Cllr Moy; with 2 in favour and 1 abstention.

101303 – Mrs A Broadhurst (Salary owed June – March)	£340.06
101304 – Mrs A Broadhurst – Expenses (Laptop case, mileage, cartridges)	£225.58
101305 – Treecycle Ltd – Tree works on Green	£984.00
101306 – Dandelion Time – Meeting Room Hire	£ 25.00
101307 – CPRE – Annual Subscription	£ 36.00
101308 - Mr B Scott – Wood for Fingerpost sign on Green	£193.20

Standing Order

Mrs A Broadhurst – February Salary	(£20.32 owed)	£760.00
Mrs A Broadhurst – March Salary	(£158.18 owed)	£760.00

Direct Debits:

People’s Pension – Monthly Payment (February)	£55.00
People’s Pension – Monthly Payment (March)	£55.00

Telephone Transfer:

Mr G Underdown – Ground Maintenance Works & additional jobs	£2,340.00
HMRC – PAYE (quarterly payment) <u>To be paid in April</u>	£813.51

4.4 Reviewed Standing Orders

Cllr Scott proposed that the reviewed Standing Orders be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Swan; with all in favour.

4.5 Reviewed Financial

Cllr Scott proposed that the reviewed Financial Regulations be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour.

4.6 Reviewed Risk

Cllr Scott proposed that the reviewed Risk Assessments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour.

4.7 Reviewed Internal Control Statement 2021/2022

Cllr Scott proposed that the reviewed Internal Control Statement for 2020/2021 be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour.

4.8 Renewal of Annual Subscription to CPRE

The Clerk reported that the annual subscription for CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) is due for renewal at a cost of £36.00. Cllr Scott proposed that the subscription be renewed. This was seconded by Cllr Moy, with all in favour. (Cheque no: 101307)

5. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

5.1 Upgrading of Play Area

The Clerk reported that, following the January meeting, Maria Cook had met with Kompan on site and had made a couple of amendments to the scheme for safety reasons. This had subsequently been emailed to Councillors who were happy with the changes. The Clerk had asked Maria to inform Kompan that, if the equipment could not be installed before the Platinum Jubilee weekend, it should be delayed until afterwards, to ensure that children attending the Big Jubilee Lunch would be able to use the existing play area. As there are some delays with equipment supply, Kompan has currently scheduled installation for the week commencing 13th June. Maria had sent a draft sign to the Clerk for the new play area at a cost of £52 and it was proposed by Cllr Swan to place the order for the new sign. This was seconded by Cllr Scott, with all in favour. The Clerk added that Maria would arrange for the contractor installing the equipment to add the sign at the same time. **ACTION: Clerk**
It was noted that the play area looks more open since Treecycle had removed the branch overhanging the picnic bench.

5.2 Tree Works on the Green

The Clerk reminded all present that work had been approved at the previous meeting, in the hope of saving the Field Maple on the green. Unfortunately, this had come down during the recent storm. Treecycle subsequently removed the tree and submitted a further quote for grinding out the stump. This was agreed over email at a cost of £192 (+vat) and is due to be carried out at the beginning of April (Cheque no 101309 will be issued when the invoice is received). Matt (from Treecycle) has offered to meet with the Parish Council later in the year to discuss the best location for replanting. He has also offered that, if the Parish Council plants another Field Maple, he will donate an Oak tree.

5.3 Annual Parish Meeting

The next meeting (in May) will be for both the usual Parish Council meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting. The normal PC meeting will be shorter commencing at 7pm with the APM starting at 8pm. There was brief discussion regarding producing the Annual Meeting booklet and the Clerk stated that, whilst it was additional work at a busy time, it gave residents the chance to read about the various groups, if they couldn't attend the meeting. It was also agreed that light refreshments should be organised.

The Clerk reported that 20mph speed limit schemes were becoming more popular with the Borough and County Council and Cllr Moy confirmed that this has recently been discussed at a KALC meeting. The Clerk had therefore contacted Adrian Berendt to request that he comes along, as the Speaker for the evening, to talk about the 20's Plenty Scheme.

5.4 Lambing Day

Cllr Moy reported that the Lambing Day had been a very good event, with £2,200 being donated to the Kent Air Ambulance. There was general discussion regarding gazebos and the Clerk offered to circulate details of a good quality one that the Parish Council may wish to consider if a new one is required in the future. **ACTION: Clerk**

5.5 MBC Boundary Review

The Clerk reminded all present that information has been circulated on the current MBC Boundary Review consultation, including responses from 2 Borough Cllrs. The Borough Council has recently agreed to move from the current election arrangements to one set of elections every 4 years (from 2024). It was also agreed to reduce from 55 to 48 Borough Cllrs, which will result in the ward areas needing to be reviewed. The Coxheath and Hunton ward currently includes: Coxheath, East Farleigh, Hunton, Linton and West Farleigh. But under the new proposal the ward will consist of Coxheath, East & West Farleigh only.

The proposal is that there will be 1 Borough Cllr for every 3,000 residents. The new Ward area will amount to 6,000 residents, which will mean a reduction from the current 3 Borough Cllrs to 2. The closing date for comment is the 4th April and, after brief discussion, it was not felt that a comment was required, as there would not be any significant impact on the village.

5.6 Queen's Platinum Jubilee

The Big Platinum Jubilee Lunch is to be held on the Green on Sunday 5th June. Cllr Swan had reported that the Samba Band, Concertinas and ice cream van are booked. The Sports Club has said that they may be able to arrange for entertainment for both the children and adults. Cllr Swan is to speak with Clockhouse Farm to see whether they would allow parking on their drive.

The Clerk reported that she had spoken to a print company who are offering to produce mugs at £4.50 (+vat) each and this would include a box for each one. The Clerk showed all present the proposed mug, which the company had produced free of charge and everyone agreed that this was a wonderful idea. It was noted that companies advertising to Local Councils are supplying them at £7+ per mug. These will be given out to children (up to the age of 18) in the village free of charge. It was acknowledged that many residents may wish to purchase a mug and the Clerk stated that these could be sold at cost to anyone who would like one. After further discussion it was proposed by Cllr Moy to purchase 250 mugs. This was seconded by Cllr Scott, with all in favour.

ACTION: Clerk

6. HIGHWAY MATTERS

6.1 Quiet Lanes Scheme

The Clerk reminded all present that, at the January meeting, a resident spoke about the Quiet Lane Scheme and that she had subsequently circulated some information on it. Kent Highways had been contacted after the meeting and the same response had been received by the Clerk and County Cllr S Webb.

The first step for the Parish Council would be to advise on the roads they wish us to consider. There are concerns that the quiet lanes are not understood properly as there is no enforcement of who uses them and no changes generally to speed limits as most are unrestricted. The aim of Quiet Lanes is to help preserve the character and tranquillity of rural areas by encouraging an increase in non-motorised users, whilst maintaining vehicular access. The idea is to make motorists more aware of non-motorised users and, over time, to reduce the number and speed of motor vehicles by changing the 'hearts and minds' of local residents, rather than lowering the speed limit or using physical measures for enforcement. Ideally Quiet Lanes link homes with shops, bus routes, schools, workplaces, village halls, pubs and other local amenities, allowing people to use non-motorised modes of transport in preference to cars for short journeys. Generally, to date, Quiet Lanes have consisted of no more than a post with a sign stating it is a quiet lane and maybe local advertising of the fact!

A report was produced by TRL Ltd for the Countryside Agency back in 2003 concluded that:

- No change in measured traffic on Quiet Lanes, despite large increases on adjacent roads
- No significant change in measured vehicle speeds on Quiet Lanes
- Observed increase in pedestrians but numbers remain low
- Sustained strong support for the scheme but about half say it is not working in practice
- Small declared increase in non-motorised use
- Small declared decrease in motorised use
- Declared increase in careful driving
- There remain some concerns over safety
- There remain perceived problems with quiet lanes

The Clerk reported that she had subsequently met with the resident again to discuss the response and to look at which roads should be included in any scheme. The following roads had been suggested: Charlton Lane, Ewell Lane, Heath Road, Hilltop, Shingle Barn Lane and Teston Lane.

Councillors discussed the issue of speed around the village at length and the generally feeling was that 20mph speed limits may be a more achievable solution for the village. The Clerk explained that the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) had changed slightly in that Councillors now had to prioritise each item on the plan, with KCC looking at up to 2 each year. It was noted that, as no schemes had progressed in West Farleigh in many years, this should be a priority for KCC to investigate further.

It was finally agreed that the 20mph speed limit scheme should be the highest priority, to include Charlton Lane, Teston Lane past the Tickled Trout through to Smiths Hill, Ewell Lane and the part of Heath Road around the Thatched House area. The Quiet Lane scheme could be added as an additional item to the HIP.

The Clerk stated that she would amend the Improvement Plan now, but that it could be amended if further information was forthcoming from the Speaker at the APM.

ACTION: Clerk

The Clerk informed all present that it is possible to pay Kent Police to spend a day carrying out speed checks, at an approximate cost of £500 per session.

There was then general discussion regarding the very deep potholes which have appeared around the village. Teston Lane and both sides of Heath Road, close to the Thatched House, were both highlighted as being extremely dangerous to both cars and motor bikes.

ACTION: Clerk

It was noted that there is an increasing issue of these deep potholes being just outside the white line area and KCC have stated that these are not on the highway, so will not be repaired. With the size of vehicles using this road, drivers have no choice other than to move over into this area, which is causing damage to vehicles. Cllr Moy highlighted a recent issue where deep potholes had caused extensive damage to a vehicle and, whilst the Clerk was reporting it to Kent Highways as an emergency, a further car had been damaged. It was noted that this level of service is unacceptable. The Clerk reported that KHS had contacted her to say that they are intending to carry out further works along Smiths Hill to continue the earlier drainage works, in the hope that this would help with the issue; as the flooding issue is not helping the condition of the road surface. Cllr Scott added that this issue could be resolved if they came out to regularly clear the gullies.

7. PLANNING MATTERS

7.1 Any applications received before the meeting

7.2 Planning Decisions (To be noted)

7.2.1 Decisions Outstanding with MBC

22/500385/FULL - Sundowner Charlton Lane

Erection of a two-storey front extension including alterations to roof structure (resubmission of 21/505497/FULL)

22/500032/FULL – Warnhams, Farmhouse Hunt Street

Erection of single storey extension to existing grain store to provide additional grain and agricultural machinery storage

22/500403/FULL - The Birches, Lower Road

Demolition of existing outbuildings and erection of a bungalow with associated parking and enclosed private amenity space and landscape and biodiversity enhancements.

7.2.2 Applications Approved by MBC

21/506706/FULL – Land adjacent to The Good Intent, The Green, Charlton Lane

Erection of 2no. detached bungalows with associated parking, gardens, landscaping and provisions of public amenity land (revised scheme to 20/504300/FULL)

7.2.3 Applications Refused by MBC

22/500090/FULL - Pear Tree Cottage, St Helens Lane

Partial conversion of existing garage into habitable room and erection of a first-floor side extension, including rear dormer and alterations to fenestration.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 16th May 2022 at 7.00pm (shorter meeting), followed by the Annual Parish Meeting 8.00pm (in Bramley Barn)

With no further matters to discuss, the meeting was closed at 8.20pm.

Public Discussion

The new owner of the White House public house spoke to all present regarding his future plans for the site. The petanque club has made plans to move to Mote Park, however Mr Purvis would like to be able to assist them with staying in West Farleigh. He spoke about his thoughts on plans for its future and it was noted that there is history that needs to be protected for the village. There could be the opportunity to have a club on site (but not with an alcohol licence) to be a hub for the community alongside the petanque club. After discussion, the Clerk suggested that he may wish to come along to the Annual Parish Meeting to have a chat with the residents that usually attend, as they may be able to give some thoughts that would assist him further with his plans. Mr Purvis added that he had some rough plans of ideas, which he could bring with him for residents to have a look at. The Clerk offered to email him details of the next meeting.

ACTION: Clerk