

WEST FARLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 18th JANUARY 2016 AT THE GOOD INTENT, WEST FARLEIGH

PRESENT: Cllrs B Scott (Chairman), Cllrs M Merritt, G Martin, L Johnson, J Morgan, C Stockwell, H Swan, Mrs A Broadhurst (Clerk), PCSO M Judges and Community Warden Adam McKinley

IN ATTENDANCE: Four parishioners were present.

Cllr Scott requested, if anyone intended to record the meeting, that they inform the Parish Council.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

There was no public discussion.

1. APOLOGIES

Borough Cllrs B Mortimer and J Wilson

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

There were no Councillor declarations.

3. MINUTES of the Meeting held on 16th November 2015

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

4. POLICE MATTERS

PCSO Judges reported that, from the 9th November to the 10th January, there had been one crime in West Farleigh, which was a theft of a trailer. There is one other crime currently under investigation; however no information can be released at this time.

Cllr Scott introduced Adam McKinley, who is the new Community Warden in the area. Adam informed all present that he is covering East & West Farleigh, Linton, Hunton and Coxheath and explained a little about his role within the Community. The Community Warden is there to support the PCSO, but his main role is in social care, assisting vulnerable people in the community and, amongst other things, helping with scamming issues.

5. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATH MATTERS

5.1 Highways Issues in West Farleigh

The Clerk reported that she has emailed County Cllr Stockell several times regarding the lorry issues at Teston Bridge and Ewell Lane, but has still not received any response.

Cllr Martin reported on the barriers which have been erected by Kent Highways on Smiths Hill due to a collapsed drain. The barriers are on the bend, where the road is narrow and it is forcing vehicles into oncoming traffic. There are no warning signs in either direction and there has already been one accident and several 'near misses'. This urgently requires additional warning signs. PCSO Judges offered to visit the area after the meeting. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Johnson reported that Teston Lane is flooding at the beginning of KM21 and this is due to the drain being blocked. It was noted that flooding is issue further up (past the junction for Mill Lane) as the drain there is also blocked. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Johnson reported that water is running down Ewell Lane, crossing the road at several points. The Clerk informed all present that the need for the gulleys to be cleared along this road had already been reported to Kent Highways and she would chase this with them. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Johnson reported that there are various potholes which need to be reported. The Clerk asked for him to forward the location and size of each pothole so that they can be reported online. **ACTION: Cllr Johnson & Clerk**

Cllr Martin informed all present that he had cleared the ivy close to the Tickled Trout which was spreading across the footpath.

6. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

6.1 Signage in Village Policy

Cllr Scott reported on the draft policy which had been circulated to all Councillors and stated that it was becoming quite a complex document. After brief discussion, it was agreed that the current arrangement of Councillors removing signs when necessary works well and that the policy would only complicate the matter.

6.2 Play Area

The Clerk thanked Councillors for installing the new bench in the play area.

The Clerk reported that the flooring is due to be fitted soon; however, the bad weather before Christmas had delayed the Company with their work schedule.

The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Park Leisure, who had supplied the roundabout. They have quoted £475 to install an inspection hatch which will give access to the bearings in order to be able to grease them regularly. Cllr Merritt stated that there was obviously a design fault with the roundabout and that the company should be prepared to pay half towards the cost of installing this access point. The Clerk was asked to contact the Company to discuss this further.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Merritt stated that the Downsmail had reported that, at the November meeting, the Parish Council had discussed replacing the safety flooring with bark chippings. Cllr Merritt asked for it to be minuted that this was incorrect as the Parish Council had not ever had this as an option.

6.3 Signs for the Village Defibrillator

Cllr Merritt reported that Cllr Stockwell had given him five signs to place around the village to inform residents of where the defibrillator is located. After brief discussion it was agreed that wooden frames with a perspex front should be made for the signs and that one should be placed on the leg of each notice board (x3), one at the Football Club and the other somewhere on Lower Road (either near Church Lane or St Helens Lane).

ACTION: Cllr Merritt

Cllr Martin reported that the Football Club had queried whether the Parish Council would be prepared to pay for the box which houses the defibrillator. After brief discussion, the Clerk suggested that the Club submit a donation request to cover the cost, as all donations will be discussed at the next meeting. This was agreed by all present and Cllr Martin offered to inform the Club.

ACTION: Cllr Martin

7 MATTERS OF REPORT

7.1 County Councillor's Report

No report provided.

7.2 Borough Councillor's Report

No reports provided.

7.3 Individual Councillor's Reports

Cllr Scott reported that the bin by KM21 had not been emptied.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Swan reported that there had been a reasonable turnout at the recent coffee morning, with the new Community Warden attending. After brief discussion it was agreed that the next one should tie in with Cllr Martin's 'Lambing Day' which is scheduled for Sunday 13th March.

Cllr Swan informed all present that there had recently been a number of flytipping issues in West Farleigh and the Community Warden reported that he is able to assist with reporting these if needed. He also explained that there is now an app for smart phones called Country Eye which allows you to take a photo of the flytipping and the relevant authority is automatically informed.

Cllr Merritt informed all present that he has taken a resident to Runwood Nursery to purchase an English Oak tree, which will replace the one removed on the Green. The resident has paid for the tree, stakes and delivery charge, with the Nursery offering to hold the tree until the weather improves. The lady has asked that her sons be present to assist with the tree planting as it is memory of their father and Cllr Merritt has arranged some provisional dates for February and March (weather dependant). They will also arrange a plaque and Cllr Scott queried whether it will have a ground anchor and Cllr Merritt will investigate this.

7.4 Clerk's Reports

- Bank Signatories: The Clerk reported that confirmation had now been received that Cllrs Morgan and Stockwell have been added as signatories on the account.
- Pension Arrangements: The Clerk reported that the Parish Council will be required to provide a pension from April 2017. KALC and SLCC have both arranged seminars to provide further information and the Clerk will be attending these to find out more.

8 FINANCE

8.1 Budget Monitoring

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st December 2015 was **Noted**.

8.2 Income received since the last meeting

Co-operative Interest – Direct Plus Account (November)	£ 1.66
Co-operative Interest – Direct Plus Account (December)	£ 1.45
KALC – Transparency Code Grant	£935.00

8.3 Cheques for signature

It was proposed by Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Johnson “**that the Council approve the following payments**”.

101103 - Mrs A Broadhurst – Nett Salary January (inc. overtime for creating website)	£837.23
101104 - Mrs A Broadhurst – Expenses (Mileage & Cartridge)	£ 55.69
101105 - KALC – Chairman’s Conference	£ 72.00
101106 - Broxap Ltd– New Bench for Play Area	£476.40
101107 - Mrs A Broadhurst – Nett Salary February (Post dated)	£641.04

8.4 Budget and Precept for 2016/17

The Clerk had previously circulated the budget paperwork to all councillors explaining the effect any increase in precept will have on the annual charge per household. The implications of a cap being introduced for Parish Councils was discussed and it was noted that, if the cap were to be agreed for 2017/18 and Parishes wanted to increase their precept above a 2% rise, this could result in a referendum being called to approve the rise; at an approximate cost of £1,500. The Clerk added that the cost of this referendum would need to be included in the precept increase resulting in an even higher figure being required. The Clerk suggested that £5,000 be ring fenced for the play area and Councillors were in agreement with this. The Clerk also added that the Parish Council had been discussing the possibility of obtaining a meeting room and money would need to be set aside for this project. Cllr Martin stated that the Parish Councillors do everything they can to try to keep costs low for residents and reminded all present that they complete lots of work free of charge (including recently installing the bench which saved the Parish approximately £600) and added that they do not claim Councillor expenses as some other Parishes do. After brief discussion, taking all points raised into consideration, Cllr Stockwell proposed “**that the precept for the forthcoming year be set at £17,250, an annual increase of £5.10 per Band D household per year**”. This was seconded by Cllr Martin, with all in favour.

8.5 Transparency Code for Smaller Parishes

The Clerk reported that she had submitted a grant application to help with meeting the requirements of the Code. This had been to cover the cost of setting up the website (Clerk’s hours), to purchase a laptop with an Office package and cover some of the cost of the printer. This had now been approved and the Parish Council had been awarded £935. The Clerk added that, under the Code, smaller Parishes would only have an internal audit from 2017 but a ‘one off fee’ would be paid to the external audit company to cover any issues that could arise as residents will still have the opportunity to raise queries with them. This fee would cover the Auditor’s administration costs.

8.6 Purchase of a Laptop

The Clerk asked that, as the grant cheque had now been cleared into the account, Councillors authorise her to purchase a laptop for the Parish Council. Cllr Martin proposed that the Clerk purchase a laptop and this was seconded by Cllr Stockwell, with all in favour.

ACTION: Clerk

9. PLANNING MATTERS

9.1 15/504345/FULL – American Oast, Tutsham Farm

Change of use of building from live/work use to mixed business and residential use (retrospective) – Additional Transport Statement received

Cllr Scott suggested that no further comment was required as the Parish Council’s original comments were still valid. All Councillors were in agreement with this. Cllr Scott reported that he would be going to speak at the Planning Committee meeting, which is currently scheduled for the 4th February.

Cllr Merritt stated that he had submitted a personal response to the additional Transport Statement.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Council meeting will be held on **Monday 21st March 2016 at 7.30pm** at The Good Intent

With no further matters to discuss, the meeting was closed at 9.05pm

Cllr Swan gave apologies for the March meeting.