

WEST FARLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15th MARCH 2021 held virtually via Zoom at 10.30am

PRESENT: Cllrs M Moy (Chair), J Morgan, H Swan and Mrs A Broadhurst, Clerk
Four members of public

Cllr Moy stated that there would be the opportunity for public discussion at the end of the meeting if time allowed.

The Clerk informed all present that she had received a request for a donation and asked that Councillors consider this today under Agenda item 4 (Finance). All Councillors were in agreement.

1. APOLOGIES

Borough Cllr Parfitt Reid.

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES of the Meeting held on 26th January 2020

The Minutes of the meeting had been previously distributed and Cllr Swan proposed that the minutes were a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Morgan, with all in favour. (The minutes will be signed by the Chairman, when Covid restrictions allow.)

4. FINANCE

4.1 To note Budget Monitoring Report to 28th February 2021

The Budget Monitoring Report was **Noted**.

4.2 Income received since the last meeting

(No income received since the last meeting.)

4.3 To note Transactions since January meeting

All Councillors ratified the following transactions, agreeing that this was an accurate record of the transactions discussed and approved since the last meeting.

Expenditure:

Cheques

101287 – Mrs H Swan – Expenses (Christmas tree lights)	£ 79.96
101288 – Mrs A Broadhurst – Salary Owed	£ 209.80
101289 – Mrs A Broadhurst – Expenses (Mileage)	£ 9.60
101290 – Mr G Underwood – Grounds Maintenance	£1,951.00

(includes additional work requested over the year: cutting back verge edges around green at Rookery Row, installing new noticeboard and taking away all rubbish)

Standing Order

Mrs A Broadhurst – February Salary (£41.84 owed)	£720.00
Mrs A Broadhurst – March Salary (£42.04 owed)	£720.00

Direct Debits:

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

Telephone Transfer (to be made in April)

HMRC – PAYE	£688.73
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4.4 Reviewed Standing Orders

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

4.5 Reviewed Financial Regulations – To approve

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

4.6 Reviewed Risk Assessments – To approve

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

4.7 Reviewed Internal Control Statement 2020/2021

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

4.8 Additional Donation for 2020/2021

The Clerk reported that a late donation request had been received from Pukka Ponies. It was explained that, when setting this year's budget, a sum of £1,600 had been set aside for donations. However, no one could have predicted the effects that the pandemic would have on the groups who are unable to fundraise. The decision had therefore been made at the January (2021) meeting to use additional money from the general reserves to be able to support the groups with a larger donation for this financial year. The Clerk reminded all present that, to date, a total of £2,500 had been awarded. It was noted that Pukka Ponies had arranged for Father Christmas to visit the children of the village on horseback before Christmas, as many booked visits (at garden centres etc.) had been cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions. Cllr Moy said he would like the Council to be able to make a small donation to support their work in the village and proposed a sum of £200. This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour.

The Clerk added that she had spoken to the Charity and obtained their bank details to arrange a bank transfer, as it is getting very close to the financial year end. Councillors agreed that this was the best course of action.

5. Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Emergency Powers

Members were requested to re-adopt the following statement, as advised by NALC:

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 Swan to readopt this statement. This was seconded by Cllr Morgan, with all in favour. For the benefit of the residents that attended the meeting, the Clerk explained the system that had been used during the past year, which had been for Councillors to approve payment over email when an invoice has been received. This has meant that the Clerk has not needed to use the emergency powers to date.

6. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

6.1 Post Covid-19 Lockdown Village Event

Cllr Swan reported that, as so many people have been shielding for so long, it would be nice to be able to hold an event, when restrictions are lifted, to give residents the opportunity to socialise with each other again. Having spoken to the Clerk briefly, one idea was a picnic or bbq on the village green, in conjunction with the Good Intent. There was brief discussion about whether this was a large enough area, if the event was very popular, and it was agreed alternative outdoor spaces should be investigated further over the coming months.

The Clerk stated that she wished to bring the issue of litter picking to Councillor's attention. This has been a successful village scheme with volunteers meeting up once a month to litter pick the roads around the village. A car is used to protect volunteers, as many of the roads do not have pavements. All involved take part at their own risk and MBC has always taken away the black bags afterwards. This has now been withdrawn and volunteers have been told that, by using a vehicle to shield volunteers, they could be blocking the lanes. If the practise continues MBC will report the group to KCC for blocking a highway. It was made very clear that, at no time, are any of the roads blocked to through traffic and this threat was extremely disappointing.

The Clerk had contacted East Farleigh Parish Council, as it had been noted that they have employed a contractor to litter pick. On discussion with the Clerk, this work is part of a much larger grounds maintenance contract which results in residents effectively paying for litter picking services twice (through their council tax to MBC and precept).

The Clerk was asked to contact the Borough Councillors to find out what can be done to support this scheme.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Moy reported that, since the Teston Bridge closure, all traffic is coming along Hunt Street and the amount of litter along the lane has increased dramatically. The Clerk was asked to report this to the MBC.

ACTION: Clerk

7. PLANNING MATTERS

7.1 Planning Decisions

7.1.1 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

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed at a later date.

It was noted that the next meeting will need to be within 14 days of the elections to be held on the 6th May.

With no further matters to discuss, the meeting was closed at 10.54am.

The following were briefly discussed during the public discussion:

- Litter picking
- State of the roads and pavements around Lower Road & Charlton Lane (debris from recent storms) **ACTION: Clerk**
- Speed issues on Lower Road
- Land to be gifted to the Parish Council
- Parish Council website and public speaking at the meeting
- Posts around the village green.

ACTION: Councillors to investigate further