

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Farningham, held at Shand Hall, High Street, Farningham on Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Daryl Burns (Chairman), Andie Fitzsimons, Philip McGarvey and Carol Salmon and Krishna Shanmuganathan.

In attendance: In part, PC O'Callaghan, in part, 1 member of the public, and Helen Penney (Clerk).

1. Apologies and reasons for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr McGeough, Sevenoaks District Councillors Ball and White and Kent County Council Cllr Gough.

2. Election of Vice Chair

Deferred to the next meeting.

3. Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.

None.

4. To consider, and approve if appropriate, which agenda items are sufficiently confidential as to warrant exclusion of members of the press and public under the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

None.

5. Report from the County Councillor

None.

Members agreed to discuss the agenda in the following order:

7. Report from PC 30625 Mathew O'CALLAGHAN

PC O'Callaghan introduced himself as the new Beat Officer for Farningham following a hand over from PC Mahoney. PC O'Callaghan also covers Ash/New Ash Green; Horton Kirby and South Darenth, Hartley and Hodsoll Street; Crockenhill and Well Hill.

Members discussed accidents on the A20 with PC O'Callaghan who is aware of the on-going issues around safety, illegal righthand turns and crash history.

Members advised that there had been an issue with an antisocial dog owner using Irving's Corner that was resolved by PC Mahoney. PC O'Callaghan said that he would discuss with PC Mahoney to have the information to hand should it happen again.

PC O'Callaghan advised that he is aware that Farningham is Warded with Horton Kirby and South Darenth and that crime stats are counted as the whole area rather than by Parish.

In the absence of Cllr White, the Clerk asked PC O'Callaghan if he would be visiting Horton Kirby and South Darenth. PC O'Callaghan confirmed that he will be contacting and visiting all of the Parish Councils that he covers.

PC O'Callaghan left the meeting at 19:07.

6. Report from the District Councillors

Cllr Burns read the following report from Cllr White:

Please accept my apologies but I have to attend a meeting at SDC offices between 6:30-8:30pm so your meeting may have concluded by the time I can get there.

Could you please ask Mathew O'Callaghan if he can also ensure he visits HK&SD PC meetings. Mindful there will have been two visits by the beat officer at Farningham and none elsewhere in the ward.

UPDATE

I responded to a resident complaint regarding what was felt to be the overgrowth of weeds in the river by the Lion and in front of the Cattle Screen and what they felt to be a poor excuse of wildlife being present in the vicinity. I copied FPC into the response amplifying the work undertaken by the Parish Council in 2023, also supported by the Friends of Farningham work in the surrounding area.

Ultimately, this is a matter for the environmental agency to manage and under their guidance. The river is being appropriately maintained. I have Encouraged the resident to approach the environmental agency if they should have any further queries.

Like many of you, Laurence and I attended the local plan pop-up meeting. Laurence and I had also distributed some 300+ leaflets on 30th December, primarily to residents in The Street, Rays Hill, Lombard Street, Forge Lane, Jacobs Lane and Horton Road (and also in Esparto Way) that are likely to be impacted the most. Su Hewitt informed me that they had seen a number of residents activity with the website increase in the subsequent days.

I also attended the Parish Council meeting at Fawkham on Thursday evening. They discussed the local plan and their conclusion was to agree with option 2. In, there was a lively discussion regarding the second proposed solar farm. Regrettably, I joined in the discussion halfway through, but the council agreed to share their views to help residence submit their views on the proposal. I've requested to be provided with a copy of this to ensure my Understanding of their views are correct. Points raised were that there is a number of badgers on the land and ancient woodland. Both land owners were present at the meeting and when the landowner for the 2nd Soap farm, with challenged about the crops, grown on his land, and the relationship with the quality of the soil, he seemed hesitant to confirm they grew crops. When challenged further it was confirmed Crops were growing for animal feed on 50% of the land with the remaining land not having been touched for circa 15 years. They're still seem to be some disagreement as to whether that land was still high-quality agricultural soil.

The new recycling bags for life proposed by SDC being introduced this year was raised at the last FPC meeting. I will collect a sample bag on Monday to hand to Helen, so counsellors can see the dimensions of the bag. Just want to mention there will be more handles on the bag to aid lifting. They will also be an area on the bag to display the house number. The bags are sizable, which is encouraging more recycling by residents and does prompt food tins etc to be washed.

Lastly, just a brief comment that SDC are aware of the relocation of the scaffolding firm relocating to Catahoula Fields, Eglantine Lane.

May I ask if we have concluded the positioning of the defibrillator at the Pied Bull? This was initially raised by a resident and discussed during the July Parish Council meeting.

I hope the above is helpful and do let me know if you have any questions.

Many thanks Alan.

Members asked the Clerk to request monthly updates from the Enforcement Team at SDC on all open enquiries, to add Catahoula Fields and to include important dates on the tracker.

Action: Clerk.

8. New Independent Advisory Group

Members noted the new group.

10. If necessary, a report on breaches of General Data Protection Regulations.

None.

11. Approve as a correct record the Minutes of Parish Council meetings on 6th and 20th December 2023

The Minutes from the Parish Council meetings on the 6th and 20th December 2023 were approved and signed.

12. Trident

To be completed by Cllr Salmon. Cllr Burns will contact the Editor requesting extensions for meetings held on the second Wednesday of each month. **Action: Cllr Burns and Salmon.**

13. Clerks report

The Clerk reported that:

- SDC have investigated the rescue pole at the Lion Hotel and it does not warrant a planning application in the Conservation area.
- She will meet with KCC Drainage and a Farningham resident at the Lion Cottages on the 19th January 2024, 10am to discuss an ongoing flooding problem. Cllr McGarvey added that he should also be able to attend.
- A leaf blower would help maintain the Village Hall car park and during Friends of Farningham meets. Members agreed for the Clerk to bring quotes to the next meeting and that funds from the anonymous donation money could be used for such a purchase. **Action: Clerk**

14. Planning

14.1 Planning log circulated by the Clerk on 5th January 2024.

Members noted the log.

14.2 Enforcement requests with SDC

Covered under agenda point 6.

14.3 Sevenoaks District Council Local Plan to include ratification of comments and letter on the proposal submitted to SDC.

Members ratified the comments, uploaded to SDCs portal on Tuesday 9th January 2024, and letter, emailed to SDC on Friday 5th January 2024, both sent by the Clerk in response to SDCs Local Plan 2040.

Cllrs Burns, Fitzsimons and McGarvey provided an update on the call with Laura Trott on Thursday 4th January 2024 where they were also joined by Crockenhill Parish Council and Eynsford Parish Council. They advised that Laura is against building houses on greenbelt areas unless there is community support. However, she is more open minded to developments such as the rugby stadium that has been suggested at Pedham Place but, this must also have community support. During the meeting, Farningham Parish Council set out the errors and concern with the Local Plan, Eynsford PC set out the planning objections and Crockenhill PC discussed concerns around any proposed stadium in the area. Laura said that she supported each Parish Council and agreed to write to SDC explaining this and the reasons why before the consultation closed on 11th January 2024.

14.4 Planning Applications. To consider any planning applications and to include any received by the Clerk after the agenda has been served to Councillors.

14.4.1 Reference: 23/03181/FUL

Site: Chimmens Solar Farm Land At Speedgate Farm Mussenden Lane Horton Kirby Kent
Proposal: Construction and operation of a solar farm with all associated works, equipment necessary infrastructure and biodiversity net gains. New Access Track.

Comments by: 12th January 2024

No response.

15. Finance Items for noting and decision

15.1 To approve items payable and note items paid and receipts

The Clerk reported that Renewal Invitation Letter had been received from BHIB Insurance and that the renewal quote was £2,062.19, payable in advance of the renewal date 1st February 2024. Members agreed for the payment to be added to items payable and paid this month noting that it is the final year in the three-year, Long-Term Undertaking. The remaining items payable were agreed for processing and items paid and receipts noted.

15.2 Flexed budget December 2023

Members noted the report.

15.3 New SO for Clerks salary

Members noted the new standing order.

15.4 Third signatory for Handlesbanken and UTB

Cllr Salmon agreed to be a signatory for Handlesbanken and UTB. The Clerk will inform both banks and request the appropriate paperwork to be completed. **Action: Clerk.**

15.5 Adobe subscription

Members agreed for the subscription to continue.

15.6 Parish Council Insurance Policy

Covered under agenda point 15.1.

15.7 Parish Precept 2024-2025

Members noted that the Tax Base has fallen by nearly 8 so the figure the Clerk will request for the Parish Precept 2024/25 is £48,760 which is a lower figure than agreed at the meeting in November but is still a 1.95% increase. **Action: Clerk.**

A member of the public arrived at 20:05.

9. A Public Open Session. Members of the public will be welcome to address the Parish Council with any local concerns they have. Please note this item will be limited in time at the discretion of the Chairman.

Members discussed updates on the Local Plan with the member of the public including information around how many other residents had struggled to navigate and use the SDC portal for submitting comments.

The member of public left at 20:10

16. Highways including

16.1 Update on the A20 Working Group meeting, Thursday 21st December, 2-3pm via Microsoft Teams

Cllr Burns and McGarvey advised that KCC have acknowledged changes are needed on the A20 and the accident record cannot be allowed to continue however, further investigations are required before a solution can be determined. KCC left the call with several actions including to continue investigating the causes and potential solutions to explore and discuss with Farningham Parish Council.

Cllr McGarvey requested that the Clerk report a pot hole near to the entrance of Millfield, Eynsford, Mill Lane/Priory Lane end. **Action: Clerk.**

17. Claimed footpath running from the High Street (at The Lion Hotel) to public footpath SD154 at Farningham

Members noted that the Notice of Decision relating to the Parish Council's application to record a footpath running from the High Street (at The Lion Hotel) to public footpath SD154 at Farningham has been recommended to make an order and authority has been sought and

obtained where the County Council is prepared to modify the Definitive Map and Statement in line with the request. Once the order is made (which is currently being drafted by the Legal team), it is then advertised locally to allow a statutory period of public consultation before it can finally be confirmed.

18. Items to circulate to parishioners

Items identified during the meeting and anything urgent. **Action: Clerk.**

19. Urgent Business that occurs and requires attention before the next meeting may be reported at the Chairman's discretion.

None

The meeting closed at 20:35.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 14th February 2024 in Shand Hall

Items Paid

5 January 2024 (2023-2024)

Farningham Parish Council PAYMENTS LIST

Voucher	Code	Date	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
106	Hall Hire	14/12/2023	Farningham Village Hall	X	36.25		36.25
132	Computer	14/12/2023	Miss H Penney	S	16.64	3.33	19.97
133	Bank charges	14/12/2023	Handelsbanken	X	15.10		15.10
134	Clerk's salary (net)	27/12/2023	Miss H Penney	X	1,030.60		1,030.60
135	Salary On Costs (Tax, NI etc)	14/12/2023	HM Revenue and Customs	X	315.59		315.59
136	Pension (Parish Council and Clerk's contributions)	18/12/2023	Nest Pensions	X	144.33		144.33
137	Electricity Charges	19/12/2023	npower	L	369.23	18.46	387.69
138	Telephone /Broadband	14/12/2023	Miss H Penney	S	4.12	0.83	4.95
139	Postage/Stationery/Print	14/12/2023	Miss H Penney	X	5.00		5.00
140	Donations to Voluntary Organisations	14/12/2023	Darent River Preservation Society	X	20.00		20.00
141	Donations to Voluntary Organisations	14/12/2023	Friends of Farningham	X	67.35		67.35
142	Hall Hire	06/12/2023	FPC	X			
144	Clerk's salary (net)	22/12/2023	Miss H Penney	X	374.81		374.81

Total		2,399.02	22.62	2,421.64
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Receipts

Farningham Parish Council RECEIPTS LIST

Voucher	Code	Date	Bank	Description	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
19	Anonymous Donation	15/12/2023	FPC Current Account (HB)	Anonymous Donation	X	141.00		141.00
20	Electricity Credits	13/12/2023	FPC Current Account (HB)	Electricity Sub-Station Village Hall	X	51.94		51.94
21	Bank Interest	31/12/2023	FPC Deposit (HB)	Bank Interest	X	15.81		15.81
				Total		208.75		208.75

Items payable

9 January 2024 (2023-2024)

Farningham Parish Council PAYMENTS (AWAITING AUTHORISATION) LIST

Voucher	Code	Date	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
107	Newsletters	10/01/2024	ColourFactory Kent Ltd	X	145.00		145.00
143	Donations to Voluntary Organisations	10/01/2024	CPRE	X	60.00		60.00
145	Donations to Voluntary Organisations	10/01/2024	Bees not Wasps / Wested Logistics Ltd	X	455.00		455.00
146	Computer	10/01/2024	Miss H Penney	S	16.64	3.33	19.97
147	Bank charges	10/01/2024	Handelsbanken	X			
148	Clerk's salary (net)	10/01/2024	Miss H Penney	X	1,073.85		1,073.85
149	Salary On Costs (Tax, NI etc)	10/01/2024	HM Revenue and Customs	X	66.86		66.86
150	Pension (Parish Council and Clerk's contributions)	10/01/2024	Nest Pensions	X	97.53		97.53
151	Electricity Charges	10/01/2024	npower	L	382.58	19.13	401.71
152	Telephone /Broadband	10/01/2024	Miss H Penney	S	4.12	0.83	4.95
153	Postage/Stationery/Print	10/01/2024	Miss H Penney	X	5.00		5.00
154	Insurance	10/01/2024	BHIB				

Total **2,306.58** **23.29** **2,329.87**