

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Farningham held at Shand Hall, High Street, Farningham on Wednesday 8th January 2025 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Daryl Burns (Chair), Andie Fitzsimons, Philip McGarvey, Kevin McGeough and Carol Salmon. Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) Cllr Laurence Ball and Alan White.

In attendance: one member of the public and Helen Penney (Clerk).

1. Apologies for absence.

KCC Cllr Roger Gough.

Cllr Burns advised that she has received and accepted the resignation of Cllr Keith. The Clerk advised that the notice of the vacancy will be displayed the 24th January 2025 after which, if an election is not called, the Parish Council can advertise a second casual vacancy in the Parish. **Action: Clerk.**

2. Co-option.

None.

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, agenda items 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. Trident.

To be prepared by Cllr Salmon. **Action: Cllr Salmon.**

6. Report from the County Councillor.

Cllr Burns read a written report that had been provided in advance of the meeting in Cllr Gough's absence:

Happy New Year, and my apologies that I am sending apologies for tonight's meeting at a relatively late stage. I have to prepare for an extraordinary County Council meeting tomorrow, followed by a Cabinet meeting, to establish the Council's response to the requirements of the government's English Devolution White Paper, which herald the biggest changes in local government in at least 50 years.

I am copying in Daryl and Alan, and I hope my message gets to you in time for the meeting.

Please can I pass on the following updates:

- Till Avenue - Nigel Rowe has confirmed that no mention of Till Avenue was made during the recent HIP meeting and it does not appear on the latest HIP. My understanding is, however, that this predated the last Parish Council meeting which I attended (11 December). If the PC wishes this to be taken forward under the HIP, this can be raised with Nigel and added at any time. I will continue to pursue this issue.
- Nigel confirmed that the PC were very happy with recent A20 improvements but are concerned

about the other side of the roundabout in the remaining 40mph section. Nigel advised they will look at this as part of the HIP.

- On other matters related to the A20 (and junctions with the A225), I will continue to take up with Highways officers the proposals for addressing illegal right turns at the top of Eynsford Road (this was committed to be taken up in the New Year, which we are now in). The hatching on the A20 has now been restored.
- Bus Route 414 – I took this up with our Public Transport team and have had the following reply - *Ultimately this is a question for Arriva and we will raise this as part of our next programmed meeting with them which is planned for next week. Without pre-empting their position on this, we have had a look and think it perhaps unlikely that they will be able to accommodate this where the extra time needed would either demand an additional vehicle or would reduce the frequency of the service for all areas currently served. Probably also worth noting that Farningham is served by other services albeit ones that don't offer the same destinations as the 414 but do ensure that the area is connected. Once we have Arriva's feedback I will relay this back.*

For information

- Kent County Council Urgent Road Closure - Hillside, Farningham - 8th January 2025 (Sevenoaks) - It will be necessary to close Hillside, Farningham from 8th January 2025 for up to 2 days. The road will be closed outside of 15 Hillside. There is no alternative route. Every effort will be made to maintain access for residents whenever it is safe to do so. This is to enable carriageway patching to be carried out by Kent County Council.

Members advised that not all of the hatching has been reinstated and requested that the Clerk inform Cllr Gough. **Action: Clerk.**

Members agreed to discuss the agenda in the following order:

8. 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.

One member of the public attended to observe the meeting.

9. Approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on the 4th and 11th December 2024.

The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record of the meetings held on the 4th and 11th December 2024.

10. Clerks report.

The Clerk reported that:

SDC have stopped supplying Town and Parish Councils with clear recycling sacks as every household has now received their green recycling bag for life.

At the request of a member of the Village Hall Committee, their name has been redacted from two sets of Annual Parish Meeting minutes.

Cllr Ball has invited all Members to attend the Chairmans Valentines Ball at the Alexander Suite, Swanley on Saturday 15th February 2025.

The Village Hall Committee is hosting a table top sale in the Village Hall on Saturday 25th January 2025, 9:30am to 12pm.

Mark Gallant has advertised a funding opportunity with the Countryside Charity, CPRE (National), to support the Hedgerow Heroes project in Kent and has asked if Farningham Parish Council (FPC) would like to be involved. If successful, the Hedgerow Heroes project would be open to private landowners including FPC. Members resolved for the Clerk to discuss potential opportunities at Farningham Woods with SDC and Cllr McGarvey will forward information to the Millfield Trust. **Action: Cllr McGarvey and the Clerk.**

The Village Hall Committee has asked if funds in the Ted Saxton account can be used towards replacing some doors at the Village Hall. Members agreed that the Parish Council would release the funds if more than one quote is obtained. The Clerk asked that adequate notice be given to allow the funds to be available and avoid having to use Parish Council funds whilst waiting for funds during the 40 day draw down period. Cllr Burns will pass the information back to the committee. **Action: Cllr Burns.**

Cllr Burns advised that the Institution of Engineering and Technology are hosting a free lecture on Thursday 27th February 2025 where infrastructure improvements to the M25 Junction 10 (A3) project will be discussed.

Cllr White arrived at the meeting.

7. Report from District Councillors.

Cllr Ball reported that recent information on devolution from Government could progress very quickly with Kent County Council who are expected to place a bid within the next few days to be one of the first councils to move to a Unitary system.

Cllr White reported that SDC Officers have advised that they are minded to approve the Solar Farm application at Land South Of M20 And North Of A20, Eglantine Lane, Farningham, Kent, DA4 0LD, planning reference 24/02907/FUL that FPC have objected to. Members noted the information and resolved for the Clerk to discuss community contributions with Wessex Solar Energy as they might be willing to make a financial contribution to the local community if the application is approved. **Action: Clerk.**

Cllr White reported that the bridge at Franks Lane has suffered from more vandalism.

11. Planning.

11.1 Planning log circulated by the Clerk on 3rd January 2025.

Members noted the log.

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

11.2.1 Reference: 24/03067/FUL

Site: Land West of no.64 London Road

Proposal: Erection of 2no. dwellings with associated works, access, and landscaping.

Comments by: 10th January 2025.

Farningham Parish Council **objects** for the following reasons:

- The proposal will create additional traffic hazards in an already very precarious area, renowned for

being a crash hotspot with fatalities. The driveway will open up directly onto an already dangerous junction.

- Vehicles leaving the development will have limited visibility of oncoming cars approaching from the right due to vehicles parking along both sides of London Road.
- Vehicles leaving site to turn left will join the A20 (at 40mph) immediately before the start of the NSL zone (60mph) where vehicles are already accelerating uphill and out of the 40mph zone.
- Drivers travelling along London Road to join the A20, look right to blend into the fast-moving A20 traffic, rather than anticipating vehicles leaving the development on the left.
- The applicant has admitted in the Planning, Design and Access Statement that the proposed parking allocation is not sufficient for the development.
- There is no provision or room for additional on-street parking.
- Vehicles cannot turn right out of the development (as shown in drawing 2312005-TK03, Appendix D of the Highways Technical Note) as they will be passing through a no entry zone. One no entry sign can be seen in the covering photo of the Planning, Design and Access Statement. The second sign is slightly out of shot but on the other side of London Road parallel to the no entry sign in the photo.
- The proposed development is over intensive for the size of the site.
- The proposed development is an extension beyond the built setting of the village and falls outside the built envelope, extending the edge of the built-up area.
- The proposal, at the end of the existing row of small terraced houses next to the Conservation Area would alter the street scene.
- The land lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The proposal would be inappropriate development harmful to the maintenance of the character of the Green Belt and to its openness and would add to the built form on the land to a degree that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
- The land lies within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the area.
- The proposal will have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the adjacent Conservation Area.

11.2.2 Reference: 24/03062/FUL

Site: Land South West Of Broomhill Button Street Swanley Kent.

Proposal: Erection of building to provide 4 stables and a store.

Comments by: 21st January 2025.

No objection.

11.2.3 Reference: 24/03120/CAN

Site: Telephone Call Box Farningham Village Hall High Street Farningham Kent DA4 0DH

Proposal: Removal of public payphone.

Comments by: 27th January 2025.

No additional comments.

11.2.4 Reference: 24/02442/HOUSE

Site: Hill View Maplescombe Lane Farningham Kent DA4 0JY

Proposal: Amendments: Change to roof design (pitched roof with ridge in place of flat roof), Addition of roof dormers within rear elevation and Omission of solar panels.

Any additional comments by: 13th January 2025.

No additional comments.

11.3 Planning applications to note, but not for comment:

11.3.1 Reference: 24/03356/WTCA

Site: Lion Hotel High Street Farningham Kent DA4 0DP

Proposal: Various works to trees.

Noted.

11.3.2 Reference: 24/03335/WTCA

Site: The Croft High Street Farningham Kent DA4 0DE

Proposal: Horse Chestnut - Reduce the entire canopy by 30% and remove deadwood.

Noted.

11.3.3 Reference: 24/03408/DCC

Site: Norman Road North Belvedere London DA17 6JY

Proposal: Application for development consent order for the Cory Decarbonisation Project - Pre-examination consultation (amendments to scheme).

Noted.

11.3.4 Reference: 24/03270/LDCPR

Site: Peppercorn Cottage Button Street Swanley Kent BR8 8DX

Proposal: Erection of a detached home office and gym building and a detached workshop building.

Noted.

11.4 Updates on enforcement cases and to highlight new activities or sites causing concern.

Members noted that the Clerk will contact the Enforcement Team to investigate an additional plot to the Electoral Roll at Hilltop Farm, London Road, Farningham, Dartford, DA4 0JW. **Action: Clerk.**

11.5 To discuss and note updates to on-going work with Tibbalds and neighbouring Parish Councils.

The Clerk reported that Tibbalds were expecting to send their draft work by the end of the week and that an update call had been arranged with Tibbalds and Clerks for Wednesday 15th January 2025.

11.6 To approve the letter to designate the Neighbourhood Plan area as a joint plan with Eynsford Parish Council.

Members approved the letter to designate the Neighbourhood Plan area with Eynsford Parish Council and resolved to work on a joint plan between the two parishes. **Action: Clerk.**

12 Finance Items for noting and decision.

12.1 To approve items payable and note items paid and receipts.

The items payable were reviewed and approved.

12.2 Flexed budget December 2024.

Noted.

12.3 To approve budget and 2025/26 Parish Precept.

Members approved the 2025/26 budget and resolved to request a 3.95% increase to the precept for 2025/26 taking the Precept to £52,360. **Action: Clerk.**

12.4 .gov.uk domain provider.

Members resolved for the Clerk to engage with Cloud Next and set up a .gov.uk domain. **Action: Clerk.**

12.5 Insurance renewal.

The Clerk advised that she is waiting for the renewal quote and new quotes from alternative providers. **Action: Clerk.**

13. Annual Parish Meeting, 28th March 2025, 6:30 to 8:30 pm (hall hired 6 to 9pm).

Members noted the date and time for the Annual Parish meeting, Friday 28th March 2025, 6:30 to 8:30 pm . The Clerk will send invites, advertise the event and arrange refreshments. **Action: Clerk.**

14. Vacancy for Ropers Charity Nominative Trustee.

Members noted the vacancy and asked the Clerk to request information from the current Trustee that can be shared with potential candidates or persons interested in the role. **Action: Clerk.**

15. Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme closing event, 4th June 2025, Lullingstone Castle.

Members noted the event on Wednesday 4th June 2025. Cllr McGarvey and the Clerk advised that they might be able to attend depending on times. **Action: Clerk.**

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

Cllr McGarvey reported that the Equality and Diversity Task and Finish Group at KALC is organising a visit to the Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara and Gravesend Mosque on Thursday, 13th February at midday and that all clerks and councillors are invited to attend. the Clerk advised that she had not received the invitation. Cllr McGarvey agreed to circulate to Members. **Action: Cllr McGarvey.**

Date of next meeting Wednesday 12th February, 7pm.

Requests from Councillors for the next agenda due by 31st January 2025.

Items Paid

Farningham Parish Council PAYMENTS LIST

Voucher	Date	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
122	10/12/2024	Phone & Broadband charges	Talk Mobile	S	4.12	0.83	4.95
121	18/12/2024	Electricity supply	npower	L	378.27	18.91	397.18
123	19/12/2024	Printing	Miss H Penney	X	5.00		5.00
111	19/12/2024	Printing	ColourFactory Kent Ltd	X	156.00		156.00
116	30/12/2024	Acrobat	Adobe Acrobat	S	16.64	3.33	19.97
124	19/12/2024	Shand Hall Hire	FPCC	X	20.00		20.00
139	19/12/2024	Fly Tipping	Sevenoaks District Council	S	316.67	63.33	380.00
117	19/12/2024	Bank charges	Handelsbanken	X	12.10		12.10
118	19/12/2024	Clerk's salary	Miss H Penney	X	1,104.72		1,104.72
119	19/12/2024	Tax/NI	HM Revenue and Customs	X	83.96		83.96
120	19/12/2024	Pension contribution	Nest Pensions	X	101.46		101.46
125	19/12/2024	Travel expenses	Miss H Penney	X	3.15		3.15
126	19/12/2024	DONATION	Anthony Roper School	X	200.00		200.00
127	19/12/2024	DONATION	Citizens Advice in North & West Kent	X	200.00		200.00
128	19/12/2024	DONATION	Darent River Preservation Society	X	20.00		20.00
129	19/12/2024	DONATION	Trident	X	60.00		60.00
130	19/12/2024	DONATION	Ellenor	X	300.00		300.00
131	19/12/2024	DONATION	FELHS	X	150.00		150.00
132	19/12/2024	DONATION	Kent Air Ambulance	X	300.00		300.00
133	19/12/2024	DONATION	Swanley Food Bank	X	200.00		200.00
134	19/12/2024	DONATION	West Kingsdown Food Bank	X	200.00		200.00
135	19/12/2024	DONATION	We Are Beams	X	150.00		150.00
136	19/12/2024	DONATION	Anthony Roper Pre-school	X	150.00		150.00
137	19/12/2024	DONATION	The Space	X	300.00		300.00
138	19/12/2024	DONATION	Royal British Legion	X	50.00		50.00
			Total		4,482.09	86.40	4,568.49

Receipts

Farningham Parish Council RECEIPTS LIST

Voucher	Code	Date	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	Total
23	Electricity Credits	19/12/2024	Electricity Sub-Station Village Hall	Farningham Parish Council	X	51.94	51.94
				Total		51.94	51.94

Items Payable

**Farningham Parish Council
PAYMENTS (AWAITING AUTHORISATION) LIST**

Voucher	Method	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
141	BACs	Planning Consultant	Tibbalds	S	6,123.29	1,224.66	7,347.95
149	BACs	Printing	Miss H Penney	X	5.00		5.00
150	BACs	Hall Hire	Farningham Village Hall	X	45.00		45.00
145	BACs	Tax/NI	HMRC	X	211.62		211.62
140	BACs	Training Course	SLCC	X	450.00		450.00
142	DD	Acrobat	Adobe Acrobat	S	16.64	3.33	19.97
148	DD	Telephone and Broadband charges	Talk Mobile	S	4.12	0.83	4.95
147	DD	Electricity supply	npower	L			
143	DD	Bank charges	Handelsbanken	X			
146	DD	Pension contribution	Nest Pensions	X	101.46		101.46
144	SO	Clerk's salary	Miss H Penney	X	1,104.72		1,104.72
			Total		8,061.85	1,228.82	9,290.67