

# Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Farningham, held at Shand Hall, High Street, Farningham on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Liz Bourne (Chair), Daryl Burns (Vice Chair), Philip McGarvey (District Councillor), Sam Pointer, Carol Salmon, and Roger Gough (County Councillor), in part.

In attendance: Helen Penney (Clerk).

## 1. Chair's welcome and apologies and for absence.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr's Latif Oztosun and Krishna Shanmuganathan.

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

None

## 3. Report from the County Councillor

Cllr Gough reported;

### 3.1 Kent Pension Fund

Members agreed that the updated cessation report and deficit should be paid as one lump sum as soon as possible. Cllr Bourne will advise the Pension Department. Everyone agreed that the outcome was very positive and thanked Cllr Bourne and Cllr Gough for their efforts when querying the original cessation report. **Action: Cllr Bourne**

### 3.2 A20 crash cluster report

That the A20 crash cluster report had been circulated and welcomed feedback/questions. Members commented that they felt the data set was flawed because performance cars and motorbikes were excluded and a disproportionate amount of data was collected from HGVs due to in-built GPS loggers. Members added that the report was missing feedback from Kent Police and if there is any correlation between the location of accidents and areas affected by poor drainage. Also, data only included the average and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds. Members requested that the report is revisited with an improved data set. Cllr Gough advised that he would discuss with the Highways Department. **Action: Cllr Gough**

### 3.3 20mph project

Cllr Gough advised that he had received and approved the Combined Member Grant completed by the Clerk to contribute £233.75 towards the 20mph TRO. The Parish Council is still waiting for the quote and design from Highways.

### 3.4 Bus Service

Cllr Gough advised that the reduction in bus services across the county is proving very problematic for all districts. He added that locally to Farningham the only significant withdrawal is from Wilmington schools, route D29W and will mean that children will have to use a later bus.

Cllr Gough left the meeting

## 4. Report from the District Councillor

Cllr McGarvey advised that the auditors have still not finished the accounts for Sevenoaks District Council.

5. **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

6. **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.**

None

7. **Approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Parish Council meetings on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022.**

Cllr McGarvey advised the Clerk that the wording in the title was incorrect. **Action: Clerk**

8. **Matters arising from the Minutes where these are not covered under the subject headings below.**

**8.1 Flint wall**

The Clerk advised that she has notified Sevenoaks District Council that the flint wall in front of the Village Hall car park will have repair work carried out over the summer. Cllr Burns advised that following the Village Hall committee meeting the previous week it had been agreed that the Village Hall will manage weeds on the section of flint wall in front of Market Meadow. The Caretaker will remove the invasive plants, leaving the non-invasive plants. The Village Hall have requested that this section of wall is not sprayed by Lothlorien. The Clerk will speak to Lothlorien. **Action: Clerk**

**8.2 Market Meadow grass cutting updates**

Members were advised that the Village Hall will arrange for the grass at Market Meadow to be cut before events as per their rental agreement with the hirer. This should allow for cutting to take place fortnightly in conjunction with the cuts arranged by the Parish Council.

**8.3 Bench and overgrown vegetation at Thames Water pumping station**

The Clerk advised that she has spoken to Jamie Riches, Thames Water, regarding the overgrown vegetation at the pumping station. Jamie was due to speak to the farmer who has previously confirmed he can cut the area when the edges of the fields are cut after nesting season. The Clerk will chase Jamie for confirmation. **Action: Clerk**

**8.4 Valley View Terrace**

It was noted that a quote has been requested from UKPN. The Clerk is to chase. Members agreed that if the quote is for less than £5,000 and the invoice received, this can be processed before the next meeting to prevent any further delays. **Action: Clerk**

**8.5 Orange Notices at sites for planning applications**

It was noted that the orange signs are still used for all planning applications.

**8.6 VAT claim sent in June**

The Clerk advised that a VAT claim for 2020/21 was submitted in June.

**8.7 Burger van, A20**

The Clerk advised that the burger van at the lorry park on the A20 layby is operational again.

**8.8 Combined Member Grant form for Cllrs Gough contribution to the 20mph scheme TRO**

Discussed with Cllr Gough under point 3.3.

## **9. Planning – including consideration of the following planning applications requiring comments and note the updated planning log:**

**9.1** Planning log circulated by Clerk on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**9.2** Ratification of planning applications received but not needing further comment or action

22/01685/LDCPR

Tamarisk 28 Beesfield Lane Farningham

Erection of a front porch. Erection of single-storey rear extension

22/01686/LDCPR

Tamarisk 28 Beesfield Lane Farningham

Demolition of existing garage and car port and erection of a new single-storey building comprising a garage and garden room

## **10. Finance Items for noting and decision**

### **10.1 Items Paid and payable**

Cllr Bourne had several queries. It was agreed that the Clerk would check and re-run the reports for approval at September's meeting. **Action: Clerk**

### **10.2 Flexed budget report, June 2022**

Cllr Bourne advised that the flexed budget has been adjusted and reforecast where necessary. It was agreed that the Clerk will create a cost centre for the Kent Pension fund deficit so that it is easily identifiable. It was agreed that the Clerk will provide an updated reserves report every 6 months, on receipt of the precept. **Action: Clerk**

### **10.3 Defibrillator cabinet for cricket ground**

The Clerk advised that she had received a credit for £58.80 as the outside cabinet for the cricket pitch had to change. The Clerk has transferred the money into the current account. Cllr Bourne asked that the defibrillators posters at the notice board and bus shelter be updated to include Swanley Recycling Centre. Cllr McGarvey will ask a GP at Braeside Surgery if they have a defibrillator on site. **Action: Cllr Mc Garvey and the Clerk.**

### **10.4 UTB transfer to HB**

Cllrs Bourne, Burns, McGarvey, Pointer and Salmon agreed to discuss transferring the Ted Saxton funds from an account at UTB to an instant access account with Handelsbanken after this had been agreed at June's meeting to comply with the Rescission of Previous Resolutions.

It was agreed that the deposit account would remain with UTB and be moved into a 40-day access account with a 1.1% interest rate. Cllr Burns will request this transfer before the 3<sup>rd</sup> August to avoid a 100 day draw down period. Cllr McGarvey will provide the second signatory. **Action: Cllr Burns and McGarvey.**

### **10.5 UTB drawdown 3<sup>rd</sup> August**

It was noted that the payment date is in two weeks' time and there are no items to add outside of Cllr Burns arranging the transfer discussed under point 10.4.

## **11. Items for decision and allocation of resources if necessary:**

### **11.1 Cattle screen - Removing vegetation**

Agreed. The Clerk will inform Tim Germaney. **Action: Clerk**

## **11.2 Cattle screen – repairing after removal of vegetation**

Agreed. The Clerk will inform Tim Germaney. **Action: Clerk**

## **11.3 Family Fun Day**

Being held on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022 at Anthony Roper Primary School, Members confirmed that they are happy to make a contribution but the information and detail from Eynsford Parish Council is not sufficient enough to be able to demine an exact amount. It was agreed that Farningham would pay up to £250. The Clerk needs more information before confirming the exact amount with Eynsford. Members also asked the Clerk to look into a Family Fun Day being hosted in Farningham next year.

**Action: Clerk**

## **12. Highways including:**

### **12.1 20mph scheme**

Discussed with Cllr Gough, point 3.3

### **12.2 A20 crash cluster report**

Discussed with Cllr Gough, point 3.2

### **12.3 Highways Improvement Plan**

Members agreed to keep the priority list as agreed in March 2022. The Clerk will complete the new HIP form for September's meeting so it is ready for the 12 month review with Highways in October. Cllr Pointer noted that Highways had included actions as a result of the A20 Crash Custer Report including an investigation into additional signage and road markings along the A20 main road. Members requested that the Clerk investigate and noted that they want this to form its own project, with funding from Highways and kept separate from the HIP. If the work has to count towards a HIP project, the Clerk can incorporate it into Priority 1: A20 Farningham Hill, Button Street to London Road, to extend the 40mph zone, improve lighting/cats eyes and regular refreshing of road markings. **Action: Clerk**

## **13. Streetlights**

### **13.1 Contract for electricity supply**

Cllr Bourne advised Members that the previous Clerk had not renewed the Authority to Act letter for eca Business Energy to act on our behalf in regards to our electricity contract. Therefore, the electricity supply is currently out of contract and explains why there was no consultation over the e-on / Npower merger. eca have advised that the current rates are very good, and better than any under contract. Members asked the Clerk to investigate further and keep a very close eye on the rates and charges, if they do start to raise sharply, we may want to discuss and action being under a contract very quickly. **Action: Clerk**

### **13.2 Maintenance contract tender**

Cllr Bourne advised that the contract with Streetlights is due for renewal in March 2023 and asked the Clerk to find alternative contractors to quote. **Action: Clerk**

## **14. Market Meadow Legal Position**

The Clerk advised that Cllr Shanmuganathan had spoken to Oliver Albury and was informed that Michael Draffan, the sole trustee of the Albury Trust, had died a few months ago. Oliver has agreed to speak to Michael's family to ask if there are any other Trustees and how the family want to proceed if they would like to discuss the transfer of ownership of the flint wall. The Clerk has been copied into an email between Cllr Shanmuganathan and Oliver and will follow up to aim to have an update for September's meeting. **Action: Clerk**

## **15. Kent Pension Fund**

Discussed with Cllr Gough, point 3.1

## **16. Feedback from the Village Hall committee meeting**

Discussed under point 8.1

## **17. Lullingstone Roman Villa**

Members asked the Clerk to request a copy of a previous newsletter and if there are any appropriate updates from Farningham Parish Council the Clerk can request that they are included moving forwards. Members also agreed that the volunteer opportunities and appropriate updates can be publicised on social media streams. **Action: Clerk**

## **18. Date of 2023 Annual Parish Meeting**

The Clerk advised that there is very limited choice to book the Village Hall throughout March, April and May 2023. Members would still like the Annual Parish Meeting to happen on a Wednesday, Cllr Burns advised that the Clerk speak to Terry Payne from the Axstane group to ask if the Parish Council can use the hall one Wednesday evening in April 2023. **Action: Clerk**

## **19. Trident**

Cllr Pointer agreed to write the report for August's Trident. **Action: Cllr Pointer.**

## **20. Date of November meeting**

Members agreed to move the date to 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 due to the Clerk being away over the last week in October and therefore not being able to provide the agenda and pack for the 28<sup>th</sup> October. Cllr McGarvey to confirm with the Shand Hall booking secretary. **Action: Cllr McGarvey**

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

### **21.1 Parish Council Website**

Cllr Bourne advised that the Councillors area on the website should be ready for September's meeting. Packs and agendas will be saved for Councillors to log in and download the documents for each meeting. She also noted that there are several pages on the website with dates that need updating annually and requested that the Clerk make note of them so that they are easy to locate and change each new calendar year. **Action: Cllr Bourne and Clerk**

### **21.2 Christmas tree lights**

Cllr Bourne requested that Clerk start to organise the Christmas tree light switch on event planned for the 25<sup>th</sup> November. The Clerk is to request a 20-25 foot, well-proportioned tree with branches and needles all the way to the top and to look into types of lights available and investigate lighting options with Streetlights, asking if the power can run from a streetlight. Cllr Pointer recommended festoon lights and Cllr Burns advised that an old colleague may be able to provide advice. **Action: Cllr Burns and Clerk**

### **21.3 The Darent River at the Lion Hotel**

Following a comment on a local Facebook page, Members discussed the River Darent appearing to be overgrown at the Lion Hotel. It was noted that Mark Gallant, Senior Partnership Officer (Rivers and NFM), North West Kent Countryside Partnership, carried out a water vole survey in July 2020 indicating the presence of water voles. Therefore, the area of reed sweet grass should be retained and it is advised that any management of the vegetation should only take place from September

through to February when the voles are less active. Cllr Bourne has contacted Mark asking if anything can be done to support the voles and for updates on relighting project and potential Ash tree that may need attention or removing near the cattle screen. The Clerk is to contact Mark to have an update for the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

#### **21.4 Wildflower meadows**

Cllr Bourne asked if Members would be interested in speaking to any local farmers/landowners to ask if supporting and contributing to a wildflower meadow would be feasible. The Clerk advised that there is a scheme running called the Darent Valley Farmer Cluster who are committed to sustainably farming and managing the local landscape and hope to eventually encompass the whole catchment for the River Darent. The Clerk is to contact the scheme to see if there is anything Farningham Parish Council can support within the boundaries of the Parish that the residents can enjoy, such as being able to walk to view a wildflower meadow. **Action: Clerk**

#### **21.5 Circular walk**

Members agreed that Farningham would like to work with Reece Evans, North West Kent Countryside Partnership, to creating a new 6km walking trail within Farningham as part of the 'Local Landscape Trail Project' on behalf of the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme. The Clerk will reply to Reece and request dates to meet over the summer and discuss further. Councillors are asked to consider circular walks that might be suitable. **Action: Cllrs and Clerk**

The Chair requested an extension, which was granted

#### **21.6 Newsletters**

Members agreed that the next newsletter would be delivered to residents in October to advertise the turning on of the Christmas tree lights on the 25<sup>th</sup> November. The Clerk will add 'Newsletter' to the next agenda for further discussion. **Action: Clerk**

#### **22. Date of next meeting 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

The meeting ended at 09:04pm