

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Farningham held virtually on the 'Zoom' platform on Wednesday 6th May 2020 at 7.00pm

Present: Cllr. D. Burns (Chair)
Cllr. L. Bourne
Cllr. R. Hirons
Cllr. P. McGarvey (District Councillor)
Cllr. C. Salmon
Cllr. K. Shanmuganathan
Mrs. J. Gray (Clerk)

13. Chairman's Welcome, Apologies for absence:

1. The Chair welcomed five Parish Councillors which included the District Councillor P. McGarvey, the County Councillor, Roger Gough,

2. The Chair explained that in view of the Covid-19 virus pandemic government guidelines meant the Annual Parish Meeting had to be cancelled and the usual Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, held each May had been deferred. The Clerk had circulated annual reports from local and voluntary organisations, Anthony Roper Charity, Farningham United Charities, the Church, the History Society, Farningham Cricket Club, Farningham Village Hall, Darent River Preservation Society and Campaign to Protect Rural England and would circulate to anyone else interested.

14. County Councillor:

The County Councillor, R. Gough advised:

1. London Road, Swanley had recently been resurfaced and then was immediately dug up by Thames Water due to a collapsed pipe which led to the failure of a sewer. A subsequent gas leak led to the need for other works on the road (by SGN).
2. Roots had been cut out around the drain on the right exit to Button Street to try to alleviate the flooding there and a report was awaited.
3. Kent Highways had kindly organised the emptying of an old Victorian chamber by Bridge Cottage, High Street. The Contractors' findings suggest this is a foul chamber, which may form part of a private system, and therefore KHS do not believe this chamber forms part of the highway surface water system. The Clerk was asked to check if Thames Water had been informed as the problem will recur.
4. Kent County Council were reopening their Household Waste and Recycling Centres the following week with a booking system in place.

15. Public Participation:

1. A resident briefed the meeting on progress of the landscaping following the approval of planning application no. SE/19/03228/CONVAR at Acer House Practice, High Street, for a minor material amendment to 19/00226/CONVAR to the frontage. Sevenoaks District Council's tree officer had decided the oak tree to the front of the new extension must be removed because the roots may have been damaged during the laying of the hard surface for car park. A replacement tree of an agreed size was being sought and a yew hedge will also be put in place behind the brick wall adjoining the High Street.

2. Two residents were in attendance as they were interested in the Casual Vacancy.

3. Mr Chris Bourne briefed Councillors on the Accessibility course he had attended run by SLCC. Legislation meant accessibility compliance would have to be addressed on websites by September 2020. Councillors agreed he should build the new website on the Hugo Fox platform and he was thanked for undertaking this big task for the Parish Council.

4. Rick Bayne of the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership gave an informative PowerPoint presentation on screen regarding the Scheme's progress which is in the third year of five. He thanked the Parish Council for their five-year commitment to donate to the scheme. He understood there would be an extension of time due to the pandemic situation. The Clerk was asked to circulate the presentation to Councillors which can also be viewed on their website via: www.darent-valley.org.uk

16. Election of Officers and Declaration of Interests:

The Chair advised she wished to step down from the position and it was agreed to proceed with appointment of officers:

Nominations for office of Chair were sought.

1. Chair: Cllr Burns nominated Cllr Bourne for Chair and this was seconded by Cllr Shanmuganathan. Cllr Bourne asked Cllr Burns to continue in the Chair for this meeting.
2. Vice-Chair: The new Chair, Cllr Bourne nominated Cllr. Burns for the role of Vice-Chair and this was seconded by Cllr. Hirons.
3. Planning Chair and Finance Member: It was agreed Cllr Shanmuganathan continue in the role of Planning Chair, and Cllr. McGarvey as Finance Member.
4. The Chair proposed, and it was agreed, that the appointment of representatives to organisations would be deferred until the Council had a full complement.
5. The declarations of interest stood as previously recorded in May 2019. Councillors were asked to inform the Clerk should they have any changes.

17. Matters Arising and Confirmation of the Minutes of the last Meeting;

1. It was agreed Cllr. Salmon would write the monthly report; Trident would be circulated in electronic form and would be available to all on the church website: efl-churches.org
2. It was agreed the Chair could sign the minutes of the meeting held on 6th April 2020, which had already been agreed, to confirm they were a true record.
3. The burger van and gas canisters abandoned on the A20 London Road lay-by had been removed by Sevenoaks District Council.
4. Prime One Maintenance had installed a trial CCTV camera in the High Street on a Parish Council owned lamp post; the Clerk had asked for the camera to be moved to a pole bracket further down the road closer to shops and businesses.
5. A resident of Alban Crescent had written to the Clerk asking for advice on how to secure their parking place; they already had a dog bone marking. They had since been in touch with both Kent County and Sevenoaks District Council's officers.
6. The Clerk had received a communication from a neighbour of Farningham Oak who had moved out during the renovation of his home, necessary after the fire in November 2019. It was agreed the Chair write to the Farningham Oak owners asking for an anticipated time scale of site clearance and rebuild.
7. The Clerk was asked to remind SL Treecare that the works on cutting back trees in Irving's Corner, High Street, needs to be completed. The company had confirmed they were in lockdown.

8. It was agreed the Clerk would try to source some stickers which state that general litter and dog waste can both be placed in Sevenoaks District Council's litter bins.

9. The Village Hall Chair had replied to the Clerk confirming they discouraged the use of the Market Meadow for cars and parking for events like fetes and weddings due to potential danger to pedestrians with vehicles on the move. They would make exceptions at the relevant time if it was requested and if the ground was hard with a donation to the Hall made. She asked if the Parish Council would be prepared to make a contribution towards the annual grass cutting costs of Market Meadow. It was agreed Cllr Burns would respond that it is the Parish Council's plan to get one Contractor to do all the grass cutting across the Parish under one contract so this would be reviewed later in the year.

10. As a result of the lockdown it was apparent there is ample parking for residents in the High Street. At the last meeting Cllr McGarvey agreed to liaise with SDC's officers re WJ King Motors Ltd regarding their parking of vehicles which could amount to "trading from the highway" which is not permissible."

11. The Cricket Club had written confirming the measures they had been taking in order to secure the survival of the club until the next season. They had already written stating they maintain their own grounds and mow the grass. It was agreed the Clerk contact them in the Autumn to see how they are faring.

12. The Clerk was asked to write to Sevenoaks District Council to ensure the play equipment in Oliver Crescent is safety checked before the playground is reopened.

13. Go Coach who operate through the village had furloughed many of its bus drivers and suspended services 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 8 but at the same time introduced a new 'on demand' service, Go2, to enable those using it to get a taxi bus type service to their chosen destination, in most cases within half an hour of calling.

14. Cllr Salmon had been approached by a resident regarding the thistles and brambles at the Thames Water treatment works on the Darent Valley Path. The Clerk had written to Thames Water and a meeting date was awaited following the easing of the lockdown period. It was agreed to invite the concerned resident.

15. A gentleman had been found sleeping rough under the A20 road bridge, beside the river. He was referred to Sevenoaks District Council's Housing Advice team who had arranged a visit by a representative from the charity Porchlight.

16. It was agreed to settle the invoice from Lothlorien Landscapes for a grass cut agreed in Oliver Crescent totalling £80.00 plus VAT.

18. Planning;

1. It was agreed the following comments be sent regarding planning applications received from Sevenoaks District Council:

SE/20/00858/HOUSE Kuling, Old Dartford Road Rear extension, and loft conversion with side dormers SUPPORT

SE/20/01023/HOUSE 48 Oliver Crescent Part 1 storey/ part 2 storey rear extension and new porch APPLICATION INVALID AS AT 20.4.2020

SE/20/00990/HOUSE Morning Glory, Eynsford Road Raising of existing roof to allow better use of existing room. New window to South elevation. SUPPORT

SE/20/00737/LDCEX Maplescombe Farm, Maplescombe Lane Use of buildings and land for the repair and respraying of motor vehicles OBJECTION

SE/20/00762/FUL Land Adjoining Dunbrae, Sparepenny Lane Removal of existing swimming pool and pool room and the construction of a new detached house with associated car parking, cycle and bin storage and landscaping
NO COMMENT

SE/19/03570/HOUSE Maplescombe Farm House, Maplescombe Lane Internal alterations at ground and first floor including removal of modern fabric. Alterations to fenestration to include enlargement of windows on West Elevation. Proposed new landscaping to front garden. A revised scheme has been submitted omitting various internal works. SUPPORT

SE/20/01144/AGRNOT Land west of Gabrielspring Road, Fawkham Steel framed barn No Comment

SE/20/01094/HOUSE 1 Alban Crescent Proposed first floor side extension, floor plan redesign and all associated works (documents awaited) No Comment

2. Planning Decisions:

SE/20/00395/HOUSE 58 London Road Single storey rear side extension with pitched roof and rooflights. Rear garden shed. Landscaping works. GRANTED

SE/20/00111/CAN Telephone Call Box Farningham Village Hall High Street Removal of public payphone. No Objection Lodged.

SE/20/00287/FUL Charton Vale Eglantine Lane Horton Kirby Change of use of two agricultural buildings (sui generis) to general industrial (Use Class B2) with ancillary showroom, office and staff room REFUSED

SE/20/00237/FUL Charton Vale, Eglantine Lane, Horton Kirby Erection of hay barn REFUSED

SE/19/02067/FUL Hilltop Farm, London Road Proposed retention of 14 pitch private gypsy/traveller site
GRANTED

SE/19/03456/FUL Hill Farm, Farningham Hill Road (1 March to 1 November annually) and subsequent winter storage in the same location GRANTED

SE/20/00423/HOUSE Bryony Hill Cottage Dartford Road Single storey rear extension projecting 5.3 metres with velux windows, solar panels and removal of chimneys GRANTED

SE/20/00551/LBCALT The Pied Bull, High Street Repairs to the existing gable roof and wall GRANTED

SE/00724/FUL Telephone Exchange, London Road Fenestration alteration on the ground floor south elevation, at high level GRANTED

SE/ 19/03570/HOUSE and SE/ 19/03571/LBCALT Maplescombe Farm House, Maplescombe Lane Internal alterations at ground and first floor including removal of modern fabric. Alterations to fenestration to include enlargement of windows on West Elevation. Proposed new landscaping to front garden GRANTED

Further information received:

SE/20/00329/FUL Mills Family Ltd Axel House 3 London Road Change of use from former telephone exchange B1 to place of worship D1. Additional information has been received from the applicant: Confirmation of amended operating hours, and an acoustic assessment.

Enforcement:

Stephen Whitehead, Enforcement Officer at Sevenoaks District Council had reported to the Clerk that after lockdown he would make the fourth compliance investigation visit at the Eglantine Farm site in Eglantine Lane.

19. District Councillor:

Cllr McGarvey reported Sevenoaks District Council had begun seeking legal advice to launch Judicial Review proceedings after the Government's Planning Inspector had refused to endorse SDC's Local Plan. The Inspector's final report alleged the Plan was not legally compliant in respect of SDC's Duty to Co-operate with neighbouring councils to ask them accommodate homes that could not be built in our District because of the Green Belt, but there is a heap of evidence to show that this allegation was not founded on fact. Even though the neighbouring authorities cannot help on the numbers, they had been properly asked. The Leader of the Council, Peter Fleming, had suggested the real reason the Inspector stopped considering SDC's Local Plan was the issue where SDC (in its Local Plan) would expect a developer to pay not only for infrastructure a development would need "for itself" but to also pay any inherited infrastructure deficit (and the scope or geographic area of this would need to be discussed/agreed).

The Chair asked about the emails being received from the Save 'WOLC' (White Oak Leisure Centre) group. Plans for redeveloping White Oak Leisure Centre had been approved so therefore their continuing campaign is now futile.

20. Highways, Footpaths and Street Lighting:

1. The Clerk had put a photograph on the Highways Portal of a completely blocked drain on the Main Road, A20 and been advised this should be dealt with on the evening of 13th May.
2. The Clerk received a photograph of a dead hedgehog on the verge between A225 Eynsford Road and the slip road following a grass cut by Kent Highways. The grass had been long. The Clerk had contacted KHS to ask them to be more vigilant in future.
3. Kent Highways had asked for Councillors to review the Highways Improvement Plan and return.

21. Friends of Farningham:

Friends of Farningham would be resumed once the current lockdown due to Coronavirus is over.

22. Assets of Community Value:

The Clerk had received notice that the Chequers Public House has been listed as an Asset of Community Value for five years until April 2025 and then a new application would be necessary. The Clerk was asked to diarise the necessary re-application.

23. Finance:

Members resolved to authorise the Schedule of Payments for May:

Kent County Council	Pension contributions (PC: £360.57 Clerk: £56.66)	£417.23
EON	Electricity Charges	£185.54
British Telecom	Telephone and Broadband	£47.83
HMRC	Tax and NI	
Mrs J Gray	Clerk's Salary	£741.14
Mrs J Gray	Parish Council Expenses Use of House (£20) Mobile Phone contribution (£10)	£30.00

Lothlorien Landscapes	Grass cutting in Oliver Crescent	£96.00
Information Commissioners	Data Protection: Annual fee	£40.00
Sevenoaks District Council	Farningham Woods donation	£1490.00
Streetlights	1 st payment of annual maintenance agreement	£1484.08

Signed **Wednesday 3rd June 2020**

The meeting closed at 9.31pm. The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 3rd June 2020.