

WEST FARLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 21st JULY 2014 AT THE GOOD INTENT, WEST FARLEIGH

PRESENT: Cllrs B Scott (Chairman), Cllrs B Merritt, G Martin, L Johnson, C Stockwell, H Swan, Borough Cllr B Mortimer, County Cllr Stockell (from 8.25pm) and Mrs A Broadhurst, Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: Eight parishioners were present.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

A resident spoke about concerns with the speed limit along the Lower Road. This has resulted in the West Farleigh Road Action Group being reformed and, between the four members, they have managed to obtain 300 signatures on a petition. This covers the area from Yalding Hill through to East Farleigh and the resident explained the various issues to drivers and pedestrians at several points along the road. Borough Cllr Mortimer stated that he fully supported the petition and the resident added that he hoped the County Councillor would also be able to assist him. Helen Grant MP has written to say that she will be writing to the Council to ensure that they look into the issues fully. The petition was discussed by all present and it was suggested that it be added to the village website and that forms be left in other areas of the village to obtain further signatures. It is hoped that the petition may be able to be presented to the Joint Transportation Board in September.

A resident informed all present that he had heard that the contract for the bus service in West Farleigh may not be renewed when the current one ends in four years time. Cllr Merritt stated that, as he is in regular contact with the bus company, he felt that the Parish Council would have been informed if this was the case.

A resident raised concerns regarding the lighting in Tovil.

1. APOLOGIES

Borough Cllrs Wilson & Collins and PCSO Hunter

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

There were no Councillor declarations

3. MINUTES of the Meeting held on 19th May 2014

The Minutes of the meeting had been previously distributed and Cllr Martin proposed that the minutes were a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Stockwell, with all in favour. The Chairman signed off the official copy.

4. MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19th May 2014

The Clerk asked that this be deferred until the next Annual Parish Meeting. This was agreed by all present.

5. POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk reported that there had been one crime since the last meeting, which was an assault.

6. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATH MATTERS

6.1 Highways Issues in West Farleigh

Cllr Scott reported that a meeting had taken place with the Highways Steward, Lauren Neale, and Richard Emmett. The following update to the outstanding issues was received:

Teston Lane: The flooding issues have been investigated in Teston Lane and the road is now due to be resurfaced by September.

Lower Road: The camber of the road is within acceptable limits and the main problem is due to driver behaviour. Richard Emmett said that he would drive along the length of the road again to see whether there is any safety issue. It may be possible to add a 'Slow/Camber' warning sign.

The Thatched House, Heath Road: They will look into the posts which should have been installed last year as there is no record of funding being released for this project.

Smiths Hill: The flooding issue is being investigated here and the gulleys have been checked. These are on an inspection schedule to be checked every 12-18 months. Cllr Martin stated that this should be completed monthly to ensure that the drains are kept clear.

Charlton Lane: Having walked the length of the road, Richard Emmett did find one section of pavement which required patching and he asked the Steward to report this to be progressed.

Junction of Lower Road/Teston Lane: Having discussed the concerns with this junction, Richard Emmett said that, whilst no major scheme could be completed, he would look into whether there is anything at all that can be done at this junction.

It was noted that, at the meeting, the potholes in Ewell Lane were discussed and KHS were to look at these when they left the meeting. To date no repairs have been completed. Cllr Merritt asked that the Clerk report these to KHS.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Martin reported that he has cut back the trees that were overhanging the footpath by the park.

The Clerk reported on the response received from Dandelion Time, following the parking issues at a recent event.

6.2 Road Safety Petition

Cllr Scott reported that this item had been discussed during public discussion at the beginning of the meeting.

7. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

7.1 Bulb Planting in the Village

Cllr Swan reported that she has looked into purchasing daffodil bulbs for around the trees on the village green and for near Kettle Lane, where the bulbs look quite sparse when in bloom. Cllr Johnson informed all present that the reason why the bulbs are not doing very well is because there is a road under approximately 4.5" of soil. He also added that they can look rather messy whilst waiting for them to die back before the grass to be cut. Cllr Johnson added that they would look nice around the base of the trees on the green. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Swan to purchase 500 bulbs, up to a cost of £100. This was seconded by Cllr Stockwell, with all in favour. It was agreed that a working party would be needed to plant the bulbs.

8. MATTERS OF REPORT

8.1 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Stockell reported that she will support the petition that was discussed at the beginning of the meeting and will present it to the Cabinet Member if needed. Cllr Stockell spoke about the budget savings that are required over the next couple of years and also the boundary review which will be taking place next year. Cllr Stockell reported that the highways issues are being looked into across the Borough and there was discussion about how the usual excuse for not being able to complete work is due to funding cuts. Cllr Stockell stated that the budget cuts affect the 'back room' services and that no money has been taken from front line services, however she will discuss this further with John Burr.

ACTION: County Cllr Stockell

Cllr Stockell reported that she will fund the posts form Thatched Cottage and will discuss this with Richard Emmett.

ACTION: County Cllr Stockell

Cllr Martin stated that there is a breakdown in communication between Kent Highways and Parish Councils and, after brief discussion, Cllr Stockell offered to see whether Paul Carter or John Burr will attend a meeting with the Parish Council; Councillors welcomed this.

ACTION: County Cllr Stockell

Cllr Stockell informed all present that the Integrated Transport Strategy needs to be discussed in order to be able to move forward with the Local Plan.

The width restriction at Teston Bridge was discussed, as Cllr Martin had witnessed 37 lorries driving over the bridge in 2½ hrs. It was agreed that it may be a positive step forward to ask KHS to attend the Police Forum meeting in order to obtain clarification of who is responsible for enforcement of the restriction. The Clerk offered to email the Clerk at Lenham, who arranges the meetings to find out when the next one is scheduled for.

ACTION: Clerk

8.2 Borough Councillor's Report

Cllr Mortimer stated that this is West Farleigh's first meeting since the elections and added that he is now on the Licensing Committee only so that he can spend more time helping residents. The Planning Committee meeting, where the Warnham Farm application had been refused, contrary to the views of the Parish Council, was discussed. All who had attended were unhappy as there were discrepancies in the report to Members and it was clear that the Borough Council's adviser had not been out to view the site. The Clerk was asked to write a letter of complaint to the Chair of the Planning Committee.

ACTION: Clerk

Borough Cllr Mortimer reported on a recent meeting with MBC regarding Mill Lane. It was also noted that the Borough Council had approved the application in Charlton Lane, again, contrary to the views of the Parish Council. Cllr Mortimer reported that a further meeting had been held with regards to Tutsham Farm, however, no progress with resolving the current issues has been seen.

8.3 Individual Councillor's Reports

Cllr Swan reported that hedges near Elmscroft Cottages are overgrown and this is restricting the width of the road in places by approximately 1.5 mtrs. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Merritt reported on fly posting in the village and asked that a letter be sent to farms in the area about the PYO signs which are being stuck on pallets. The Clerk requested further details for the farms to contact them. **ACTION: Cllr Merritt/Clerk**

Cllr Merritt requested that Dandelion Time be asked to remove their notices from around the village, which are still advertising an event from June. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Merritt asked that a working party be formed to replace the posts around the village green. Cllr Scott suggested that this be completed when the weather has cooled down. This was agreed by all present. **ACTION: Cllrs**

Cllr Merritt queried whether bylaws were enforced by Kent Police or Planning Enforcement and the Clerk offered to investigate this. **ACTION: Clerk**

8.4 Clerk's Reports

The Clerk informed all present of the issues that have recently been reported relating to Wyngarth Farm and the response received from the owners of the land. After brief discussion Cllr Merritt requested that the owner be informed that a gun had been seen and that pellets had been found in a garden. **ACTION: Clerk**

The Clerk also reported that she has circulated Nuisance Noise diaries which residents need to complete if they make a noise related complaint, without these completed forms, MBC cannot progress the complaints.

9. FINANCE

9.1 Budget Monitoring

The Budget Monitoring Report to 30th June 2014 was **Noted**.

9.2 Income received since the last meeting

Actual payments received since the last meeting were:

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| Co-operative Interest – Direct Plus Account (May) | £ 3.52 |
| Co-operative Interest – Direct Plus Account (June) | £ 4.87 |
| HMRC – VAT Refund | £1,659.71 |
| MBC – Parish Service Scheme (first half) | £749.50 |

9.3 Cheques for signature

It was proposed by Cllr Scott, seconded by Cllr Martin **“that the Council approve the following payments”**.

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| 101045 – Mrs A Broadhurst – Nett Salary July | £505.35 |
| 101046 – Mrs A Broadhurst – Expenses (Inc. share of SLCC membership) | £ 95.90 |
| 101047 – Mr D Buckett – Internal Audit | £183.60 |
| 101048 - Mrs A Broadhurst – Nett Salary August (Post dated) | £505.55 |

9.4 Internal Audit Report

The Clerk had previously circulated the Internal Audit report and corresponding paperwork. The Clerk reported that she had informed the Auditor that she would not recommend moving away from the 2 signature rule for cheques that the Parish Council has present, Councillors were in agreement with this. The Clerk also reported that the Auditor had forwarded copies of the new model Standing Orders which she is hoping to incorporate into the current set for adoption at the next meeting, along with the Statement of Internal Control document.

9.5 Increase to Clerk's Hours

Cllr Scott reported that the Clerk has circulated the hours she has worked over a period of time and it was noted that these exceed the current hours being paid each week. Cllr Martin stated that the Parish Council needed a good Clerk in order to function correctly. The Clerk reminded all present that, historically, up to 20% of the Clerk's hours could be funded through Concurrent Functions. This grant has now been replaced and, having spoken with Borough Councillor Wilson, it may be possible for KALC to look into this issue further. County Cllr Stockell asked for details to be forwarded to her so that she can investigate this. **ACTION: Clerk/County Cllr Stockell**

After discussion Cllr Scott proposed that the Clerks hours be increased, by 3 hours, to 15 hours a week. This was seconded by Cllr Johnson, with all in favour.

9.6 Formal Complaint to MBC

Cllr Scott reported that a meeting has now taken place with a solicitor and that the Clerk has forwarded the addition information that he had subsequently requested. He also wishes to discuss the matter with a colleague before reporting back to the Parish Council. All Councillors were in agreement that this had been a positive step forward.

10. PLANNING MATTERS

10.1 Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 19th May 2014

The minutes were Agreed as an accurate record and the Chairman signed off the official copy

10.2 14/0641/GFBR – Marshalls, Hunt Street

Continued siting of polytunnels at Small Profits, Maynards Farm and Marshalls Farm, West Farleigh. In part retrospective

There was brief discussion which reflected that it was better to be able to grow the fruit in the Garden of England, rather than to have to keep importing produce.

Parish Council Recommendation: West Farleigh Parish Council has no objection to the above application and does not request that it is reported to the Planning Committee

10.3 Any Planning Applications received before the meeting

The Clerk reported that no further applications had been received

10.4 Paperless Planning E-Consultation – To discuss

The Clerk had previously circulated a report detailing the ongoing technical issues which have been encountered with the new planning portal and e-planning system. The Clerk reported that the Parish Council has now been registered, however, Councillors must continue to view applications on the MBC portal, as the Clerk is the only person with access to the Parish Council consul tee portal. The Clerk also reported that she has spoken to the person overseeing the new system about the problems of West Farleigh viewing applications on line, especially at meetings. He had confirmed that the team are aware that there are Parishes that will struggle under the new system and that they will continue to send out paper copies of applications until these issues have been resolved. There was then brief discussion regarding the broadband speed in West Farleigh and County Cllr Stockell suggested that the Clerk contact the person who had been overseeing the introduction of the new fast broadband to explain that some Councillors are only obtaining speeds of 0.3.

ACTION: Clerk

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Council meeting will be held on **Monday 15th September 2014 at 7.30pm** at The Good Intent

With no further matters to discuss, the meeting was closed at 9.15pm