

# WEST FARLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2020 AT THE GOOD INTENT, WEST FARLEIGH

**PRESENT:** Cllrs J Morgan, M Moy, H Swan, Borough Cllr R Webb (from 8.15pm) and Mrs A Broadhurst, Clerk  
**IN ATTENDANCE:** Six parishioners were present

### Public Discussion

A resident reported a pothole on Teston Lane (100m past Mill Lane on the other side of the road) **ACTION: Clerk**  
A resident reported on the vegetation in Teston Lane, which is overhanging the carriageway on both sides of the road. **ACTION: Clerk**

The Clerk reported that she needed to add an urgent item relating to Covid-19, following a statement from NALC. It was agreed that this would be discussed under Agenda Item 7.3 (Clerk's Report).

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Borough Cllr Webb, as he was required to give a report at another meeting, however he did attend later during the meeting.

### 2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### 3. MINUTES of the Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020

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

### 4. POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, there had been 1 crime reported in the village. PCSO Morris had subsequently confirmed that this crime had not occurred. There had been 16 crimes in the surrounding villages, East Farleigh (3), Coxheath (10), Hunton (2), Linton (1).

### 5. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATH MATTERS

#### 5.1 Highways Issues in West Farleigh

Cllr Swan thanked a resident for work he had completed in Kettle Lane. A gully had been created into the field, to resolve the huge puddle issues.

Cllr Moy reported that pothole repairs had been completed in the vicinity of Teston Lane and Lower Road.

Cllr Moy reported that there was a pothole on Teston Lane (Teston side of the bridge) approximately a 1' long and 10" deep.

**ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Swan reported that, close to the Thatched House, the 20mph sign has been hit and is now facing the wrong way (coming from Coxheath).

**ACTION: Clerk**

#### 5.2 Traffic Survey for Lower Road

The Clerk reported that there was no update from Kent Highways relating to this matter. It was noted that the Clerk wished to speak further with KHS and the Auditor regarding purchasing a VAS/SID, if the feasibility study proves positive.

**ACTION: Clerk**

#### 5.3 Vegetation in Charlton Lane

It was noted that a resident has contacted the Parish Council, following discussion on this subject at the January Parish Council meeting, as they were concerned at the verge being taken back too far. Cllr Swan read out an email which had been received, following her discussion with the residents over the issue. Cllr Swan explained that it was not just vegetation which is causing the problem, but also the fact that approximately 15" of soil has built up in the road and then there is 3" of twigs etc. (a picture was shown to all Councillors). This has resulted in there being a loss of approximately 18" of carriageway. It was noted that KHS had marked up where the road boundary should be and the subsequent remedial work was not to this mark. After brief discussion it was agreed that KHS be contacted again to ask them what the width of the carriageway should be and to investigate where the original edge of the road is. The Clerk asked for the photo to be forwarded so that she could include it in the report to KHS.

**ACTION: Clerk/Cllr Swan**

## **6. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

### **6.1 Internet Service in the Village**

This item was deferred as Cllr Pritchard was not in attendance and no report had been received.

### **6.2 Replacement Notice Board**

The Clerk had contacted 5 companies to obtain quotes to replace the noticeboard which had been damaged in Charlton Lane. Three had quoted but one was not able to offer a recycled material board and had detailed a metal one instead. After brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr Moy to purchase a notice board from Greenbarnes Ltd at a cost of £936.48 (+ vat). This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour. It was noted that Geoff Underdown had offered to install the replacement and that it could be delivered directly to him. Cllr Swan queried whether this included a header and, after further discussion, it was noted that a header was required; the Clerk was asked to add this, when placing the order. **ACTION: Clerk**

### **6.3 Parish Council Web Site**

The Clerk gave a detailed report regarding the Accessibility Regulations and reminded all present that the current Parish Council website is to be closed down by EIS in August 2020, as the site will not be compliant. Mrs Broadhurst has been in lengthy discussions with 7 providers, who deal with Parish Councils. The cost of building a website ranges between £1,000 and £3,500 for initial set up, with an ongoing annual cost of £200+. Cantium (who is the current provider under the name EIS) will charge £995 for set up with a £675 annual fee, although they would waive the set-up fee for West Farleigh, as our income is under £30,000. The Clerk suggested that she build a Hugo Fox website which will be free (apart from the Clerk's additional hours). Hugo Fox is about to complete an update which will make their sites compliant with the Accessibility Regulations. This will save a huge outlay and will have no ongoing costs for the actual site. The Clerk added that KALC has circulated details of a Kent company who can sweep the site to ensure that it is compliant and can assist with writing the Accessibility Statement (statutory requirement) which will cover any parts that can't be made accessible, the cost of this will be a maximum of £150. The Clerk also spoke about the need for new email addresses to be fully compliant with GDPR, with all Parish Council email addresses being held within one account so that the addresses can be managed if a Councillor leaves, or if there was ever a data breach. The Clerk would then be able to access the email accounts to forward any required information to the ICO. It was noted that a company would be required to assist with setting this up, however the cost of this would be far less than the cost of having an entire website built.

The Clerk asked that, due to the timing of this work being undertaken, Councillors approve giving her delegated authority to progress with this in the most cost-effective way possible. It was proposed by Cllr Moy that the Clerk progress with the web site and that the additional hours would be paid after the website goes live in the Summer. This was seconded by Cllr Morgan, with all in favour. **ACTION: Clerk**

### **6.4 Lease for Land in Charlton Lane**

It was noted that the Clerk had previously circulated a letter from Rookery Estates to all Councillors relating to a lease attached to land in Charlton Lane. Following the meeting held by the Trustees of the Community Centre Fund, it had been agreed that the meeting room project would not be progressed. After brief discussion it was agreed by all present that a letter be sent to Rookery Estates serving 3 months' notice to terminate the lease. **ACTION: Clerk**

## **7. MATTERS OF REPORT**

### **7.1 County & Borough Councillor Reports**

Borough Cllr Webb gave a brief update on Borough Council meetings, as self-isolation measures had just been announced by Central Government. Meetings will be cancelled as much as possible to avoid the spread of Covid-19. Cllr Webb added that, due to the elections being postponed for 1 year, he would be prepared to be co-opted as a Parish Councillor to assist, due to the low number of Councillors and confirmed that he lived within the 3-mile boundary. The Clerk thanked Borough Cllr Webb for his assistance and it was agreed that they would speak further, when another meeting could be arranged.

### **7.2 Individual Councillor Reports**

Cllr Morgan reported that the Village in Bloom group are intending to build a planter around the noticeboard posts and she had queried this work with them. They have confirmed that they will add a waterproof coating to the legs before filling the planter. It was noted that this could cause condensation, which will result in the posts rotting. The Clerk was asked to contact them to request that a frame be manufactured to go inside the planter to protect the posts, as well as adding the waterproof coating. **ACTION: Clerk**

### 7.3 Clerk's Reports

- COVID-19 (Coronavirus) NALC Delegated Powers Plan: The Clerk read out the following statement from NALC to all Councillors:

In response to the Covid-19 outbreak in the UK and in the event that it is not possible to convene a meeting of the council in a reasonable time, the Clerk shall have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the council where such decisions cannot be reasonably deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline. This will be carried out where possible by consultation with members by electronic means or telephone. The clerk will further consult with the chairman for guidance as necessary. The delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved to the council in legislation or in its Standing Orders or Financial Regulations. Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in writing and must be published in accordance with the relevant regulations. This delegated authority ceases upon the first meeting of the council after the council meeting at which the delegation was put in place.

Due to the serious situation developing, it was approved unanimously that this was the correct course of action to ensure that the Parish Council is still able to operate in the coming months. The Clerk confirmed that she would email Councillors before taking any action.

- Annual Parish Meeting: The Clerk reported that, further to the announcement shortly before the meeting that everyone over 70 and people in vulnerable groups should self-isolate for 12 weeks, Councillors needed to seriously think about the wellbeing of residents with regards to forthcoming meetings and events. It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting should be cancelled. The Clerk raised concerns with regards to signing off the annual audit documents, which is also due to take place at the May Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and it was agreed that a closed meeting may need to be held in order to complete this business, along with taking the opportunity to co-opt new Councillors at the same time. It was agreed that, as this is a fast-moving situation, decisions would need to be made closer to the time, as mid-May – June is when the virus is due to peak in the UK.
- Councillors then also agreed that the coffee morning with the Kent Police Crime Commissioner, due to be held on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March, should also be postponed. **ACTION: Clerk**
- Internal Audit: The Clerk reported that this has been arranged for mid-May.

## 8. FINANCE

### 8.1 Budget Monitoring

The Budget Monitoring Report to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020 was **Noted**.

### 8.2 Income received since the last meeting

(No income received since the last meeting.)

### 8.3 Cheques for signature

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

101267 – Mrs A Broadhurst – Salary owed (Jan, Feb & March)	£ 37.20
101268 – Mrs A Broadhurst – Expenses (Cartridges, Mileage)	£102.65
101269 – Surrey Hills Solicitors LLP – Legal Services	£660.00
101270 – CPRE – Annual Subscription	£ 36.00
101271 - East Farleigh Primary School – Donation	£250.00

#### Standing Order

Mrs A Broadhurst – March Salary (€732.40 - €12.40 owed)	£720.00
Mrs A Broadhurst – April Salary	£720.00

#### Direct Debits:

People's Pension – Monthly Payment (March)	£ 55.00
People's Pension – Monthly Payment (April)	£ 55.00

#### Telephone Transfer:

HMRC (Payment for Jan, Feb & March due in April)	£678.54
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#### **8.4 Additional Donation for 2019/2020**

The Clerk reported that a further request had been received from the Gardening Club at East Farleigh Primary School. Their greenhouse had been damaged in the recent storms and is beyond repair. It was noted that there is £480 left in the donation budget for the current financial year.

It was proposed by Cllr Swan to give a donation of £250, this was seconded by Cllr Moy; with all in favour.

#### **8.5 Reviewed Standing Orders – To approve**

Cllr Morgan proposed that the reviewed Standing Orders be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Swan; with all in favour.

#### **8.6 Reviewed Financial Regulations – To approve**

Cllr Morgan proposed that the reviewed Financial Regulations be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour.

#### **8.7 Reviewed Risk Assessments – To approve**

Cllr Morgan proposed that the reviewed Risk Assessments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour.

#### **8.8 Reviewed Internal Control Statement 2019/2020**

Cllr Morgan proposed that the reviewed Internal Control Statement for 2019/2020 be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Swan, with all in favour.

#### **8.9 Renewal of Annual Subscription to CPRE – To approve**

The Clerk reported that the annual subscription for CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) is due for renewal at a cost of £36.00. Cllr Swan proposed that the subscription be renewed. This was seconded by Cllr Morgan, with all in favour.

### **9. PLANNING MATTERS**

#### **9.1 Any planning applications received before the meeting**

It was noted that an application had been circulated shortly before the meeting, but the documents have not been received. It was resolved that a response would be agreed over email, when all Councillor have had the opportunity to view the application on the Borough Council planning portal.

#### **9.2 Planning Decisions (Approved)**

19/505952/LBC - Elmscroft House Charlton Lane

Listed Building consent for blocking up of non-original door, replacement of 3no. windows and reinstatement of 2no. windows, internal alterations and repair works.

19/506194/FULL - Dunbar Lower Road

Erection of a single storey link extension to join two dwellings to provide one single dwellinghouse and annex.

19/505951/FULL - Elmscroft House Charlton Lane

Change of use from D1 to C3 (residential) with associated internal and external alterations and repair works.

19/506415/FULL - 3 Retreat Cottages Hilltop Hunton

Rear first floor extension above existing single storey

### **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Due to the current situation, it was agreed that this would need to be confirmed at a later date.

*With no further matters to discuss, the meeting was closed at 8.34pm.*

Following the closing of the meeting a resident asked whether there was any update on the 'Call for Sites'. The Clerk confirmed that the results of this have been delayed and would not be known until possibly Spring 2021 at the earliest.