

FAWKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Fawkham Parish Council held Thursday 19th December 2019

Members of the Parish Council:

Present: Cllr Laura Evans (Chair), Cllr Duncan Harker, Cllr Alun Evans

Apologies: Cllr Maxine Fothergill. One vacancy.

Planning

Planning:

None received.

The Parish Council email had received a query regarding planning permission for building works near Laredo, and a response had been sent confirmed that the Parish Council was not aware of any.

Planning decisions/updates:

Eureka: Status of three caravans at Eureka and The Cabin at Woodlands activity centre as permanent residential addresses – to be followed up with SDC by Cllr L Evans.

Cross Cottages 19/03193/CONVAR: retrospective application re hedges. **Objection**

West Rays: single story extension: **Refused.** Planning status of brick wall and gates - Cllr L Evans to confirm with SDC.

6 Small Grains: first floor extension. **Granted**

Hillside: Two appeals had been lodged but both were refused by Planning Inspectorate.

Parish Council Meeting

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Fothergill due to holidays.
Lorraine Harker took the minutes in the absence of a Parish Clerk.
Councillor Parkin and Harrison made apologies.
2. **Members of the Public:**
No members of the public present.
3. **Declarations of Interest:**
Cllr L Evans for an item relating to Finance.

A retrospective declaration was received from Cllr Fothergill regarding the kitchen refurbishment, as requested. An interest was declared in that an employee of hers is the wife of the owner of Russell J White Ltd who has submitted a quote for the fitting of the kitchen. However, it was noted that Cllr Fothergill was not at the Parish Council Meeting at the time of the vote being taken and has no pecuniary interest in any of these works.

4. Approved Minutes:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21st November 2019 were submitted and it was proposed by Cllr L Evans and seconded by Cllr A Evans that they be approved and any recommendations thereby implemented.

ALL IN FAVOUR

5. Matters arising:

- a. **Wig Wags** - Cllr Fothergill has contacted the school and will provide an update to the next meeting.
- b. **Brands Hatch Fire Works** – Cllr Fothergill has contacted Brands Hatch to request that notices warning about the fireworks be removed.

6. Correspondence:

- a. Letter received from SDC regarding the Parish Precept for 2020/21. This would be considered at the January meeting or separate meeting may be scheduled to review the budget and set the precept.
- b. An email was received on 25.11.19 from a resident regarding the section of the meeting open to public participation.

Standing Orders section 3 e-k confirms that residents in attendance at Parish Council meetings cannot speak during normal business, although 30 minutes is allowed at the start of each meeting for members of the public to address the Council about items relating to the agenda or to bring important parish issues to their attention. It was important to note that decisions could not be made at a meeting about items that were not on the agenda so any such items would need to be carried forward to the next meeting. However, it was felt that flexibility is allowed for residents to make comments during the meeting. It was also suggested that residents could send in questions by email if they were unable to attend the meeting, which could be tabled and responded to. This will be publicised on the website/Facebook in the new year.

- c. Cllr Parkin had sent in an email providing an update to the Parish Council on work undertaken since she was re-elected in May.

7. **Consultation on the Proposed Modifications to the Minerals Sites Plan and Proposed Modifications to the Early Partial Review of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30:**

It was agreed that no formal response was required from FPC to the consultation on the soundness and legal compliance of the Proposed Modifications.

8. **VE Day 75.**

An update on progress with plans for VE day celebrations on 10th May was given:

- Cllr A Evans has spoken to Christopher Proudfoot who will be speaking to Steephill School at their assembly.
- Cllr Fothergill will speak to Fawkham Primary School about whether they would like Christopher Proudfoot to speak to them as well.
- Tom Hicks will help to raise a toast at 3pm at the Rising Sun.
- Cllr Harker has emailed the church about discussing plans with them. The plan is to have the celebrations on the Sunday after church service with residents bringing their own picnic.
- Cllr Harker to also ask when the church fete is in 2020 to see how this works with the VE Day and to enquire if they have contact details for a piper that can be used.
- Local Vocals has been confirmed to be part of the celebrations; Jazz Force will also be contacted.
- A resident has also expressed an interest in organising an event on Saturday 9th May in Small Grains/Fairview.
- Posters advertising the event will be put up in February/March
- The village hall has been booked in case of poor weather.

9. **Local Plan update:**

Sevenoaks District Council has replied to the Inspector's letter of 28 October, 2019: [Council's letter \(ED42\)](#). The Inspector will reply after the General Election. FPC sent a letter to the Programme Officer for the Inspector expressing disappointment with her decision to cancel the remaining hearing sessions. The reply received stated: "The Inspector has confirmed that the conversation concerning the Examination is between the Inspector and the Council, and that she is not accepting any documents which address this issue. Under these circumstances I am sorry to tell you that I am not able to forward the letter to the Inspector". It is not clear at this stage what the following steps in the process will be, or when.

SDC Planning Team also received the letter and have circulated to their Planning Committee.

10. **Highways Improvement Plan:**

- a. Village gates - have been ordered, delivery expected mid-end January with installation shortly thereafter. KCC contractors and handyman are happy with timescale.
- b. Traffic Count - has taken place. Unfortunately, the counts were not taken in the positions agreed with KCC Highways and it was not possible to move them. It is hoped further counts in the agreed positions will be taken early in the new year; it was agreed that we should push for the agreed count near the church. Results have just been received and will be discussed at the January meeting.
- c. Kent County Council Highways Seminar - report to be given by Cllr L Evans in January.
- d. Other highways items - see HIP

- a. Junction of Scratchers lane where there will be new weight limit signs – prior notice of road being closed in January for this potentially.
- b. Repainting white lines – Cllr L Evans has chased a response on this.
- c. Manor Lane and Valley Road – date still tbc.

11. Fawkham Village Hall Kitchen Refurbishment:

Work to refurbish the hall kitchen has been postponed until early next year following the change in the project lead, the clerk's resignation and the resignation of a Cllr.

It was agreed that the strong work already conducted by Cllr Fothergill in producing a clear specification will be built upon, and the opportunity taken to investigate further options including whether it would be possible to appoint a tradesperson to project manage the complete refurbishment.

A full discussion on the way forward will be on January's agenda.

12. Finance:

Cllr L Evans has been the Acting Responsible Financial Officer for December.

At the previous meeting, it was agreed not to pay the Clerk's December salary and tax as the figures were incorrect. An amended cheques' list for November was provided at the meeting. The revised December salary and tax cheques have been authorised.

Cllr L Evans will work with the new Parish Clerk to review the financial spreadsheets to improve their functionality and enable the recent larger expenditure figures to be identified easily rather than grouped under miscellaneous.

Cllr L Evans has also started to pull together a budget forecast spreadsheet for 2020 with estimates on how spending, for use in setting the precept. This work will continue with the new Clerk.

13. Councillor vacancy:

An election is not required as less than 10 residents requested this. Therefore, the vacancy will be filled through a co-option process and the closing date is 10th January 2020. Interviews will be held on 16th January in a closed session immediately before the FPC meeting.

14. Honour Board:

Cllr Harker has had one quote for an Honour Board (£180 plus VAT for landscape board) but will continue to gather quotes, and estimate for lettering.

Cllr Harker has emailed the previous Village Hall Committee members and made them aware of the proposed Honour Board which will honour notable residents from the village.

15. Website:

FPC's website needs to be updated to reflect the new accessibility code. The existing KCC-provided platform will cease on August 23rd.

The current provider, Cantium (wholly owned by KCC) is offering a new service. 100 parish councils need to sign up with costs of £995 for the first year and then £675 a year in year 2 and 3. The deadline of 31st January 2020 for a confirmation has been set by Cantium and Cllr L Evans has contacted them to query what will happen if we are not in a position to confirm.

Cllr L Evans also plans to review other options which may be more expensive to start up with but cheaper for future years. Cllr L Evans to review ready for discussion at the meeting in January 2020.

16. Christmas tree lights:

The tree surgeon adjusted the lights as requested to close a gap on one side. He recommends a further 50m of lights are purchased to fill out the lower section of the tree – cost of £125 for 50m lights or £65 for 25m, including VAT. Cost to adjust and install estimated at £200+VAT.

It was agreed that this will be reviewed for 2020 Christmas.

17. Projects and Actions Sheet:

The updated Projects and Actions Sheet was discussed:

- M20 Bridge – Request highways to repair netting and fencing – Cllr A Evans to chase again in January.
- Parish in Bloom – Parish in Bloom to be entered January/February 2020 – Cllr Fothergill to progress and present a plan of action at the January meeting.

Dog fouling had been raised by one of the applicants for the Parish Clerk role and it was agreed that Cllr A Evans would pose the question on Facebook as to whether an additional dog bin was required at a cost of c£200 to purchase bin and post, plus installation, and c.£120 per year for removal of waste.

18. Open Forum for Councillors to raise matters to be placed on the next agenda:

Members were asked to consider agenda items for the next meeting. The details of the agenda item will be sent to the Clerk by the Thursday (one week) before the published meeting. Late details cannot guarantee inclusion on the proposed agenda.

- Plans for Parish in Bloom - Cllr Fothergill
- Kitchen Refurbishment - all
- Highways Seminar report - Cllr L Evans
- Discussion around website – Cllr L Evans
- Budget forecast and precept setting - Cllr L Evans

19. Dates for the year 2019/20:

Parish Council Meeting Thursday 16th January 2020 7pm Cllr interviews
 Additional Finance meeting January 27th January
 Parish Council Meeting Thursday 20th February 2020
 Parish Council Meeting Thursday 19th March 2020
 Annual Parish Meeting Thursday 16th April 2020 TBC (to be held between 1st March and 1st June)
 Annual Council Meeting - Thursday 21st May 2020
 AGM village Hall – TBC

Meeting closed at 21.50 pm.