

FERNHURST PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Parish Council held at Fernhurst Village Hall on Wednesday 12th January 2011 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mr. J. Cottam (Chairman)
Mr. M. Bishop (from 7.25 p.m.)
Mrs. N. Braithwaite
Mr. I Brown
Mr. R. Chapman
Mrs. S. Ogilvy
Mr. J. Self
Mrs. M. Timms

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Mrs. C. Barnes
Mrs. H. Bicknell
Mrs. E. Tyler
Mrs. N. Graves (District Councillor)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. D. Bleach (Clerk & Executive Officer)
Mr. M. Brown (County Councillor)
Mrs. H. Caird (District Councillor)
5 members of the public
1 member of the press

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mrs. Timms that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2010 be signed as correct. Carried.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

a) Crossfield

Nothing to report.

b) School Governors

Nothing to report.

c) Fernhurst Public Toilets

Mrs. Caird reported that the South Downs national Park will have a grant fund for things like helping with the running costs of public toilets, with grants of up to £2,000 available. The toilets would be closed for one

year, but will be mothballed. Mr. Brown agreed to write an article for the Fernhurst News setting out the position and asking if anyone could think of a solution to the problem.

d) Allotments

It was considered that the Parish Council was not in a position to purchase land for use as allotments. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the owner of land in Church Road, asking if he would object to receiving a letter from a parishioner who is interested in purchasing the field for allotment use.

e) Parish Boundary Review

No progress at present. The Clerk would shortly be sending out a short questionnaire to Vann Road residents regarding the possible transfer of their houses into Fernhurst parish.

f) Parking at Nappers Wood

A meeting was held in December with Martlet Homes, the County Council and the District Council to discuss the problem, but was not very fruitful. The Chairman intends to pursue the matter.

g) Snack Wagon/Youth Facilities

There has been no further progress. The Chairman would ask the project leader for an update.

h) Play Area – Fernhurst Recreation Ground – Cricket balls

Mr. Self had spoken with a member of the Recreation Ground Trust who has been in touch with the cricket club's insurers to find out what level of cover they have. It had been suggested that the play area should be closed during cricket matches, but this was not acceptable to the Parish Council.

3. COUNTY COUNCIL COMMENTARY

Mr. Brown commenced by thanking the Parish Council for the Christmas Party that he had found most enjoyable.

He considered that the salt and gritting arrangements had generally worked quite well but they are now a bit short on supplies. Mr. Brown added that he was encouraged that more people were now stocking and spreading salt during icy weather.

Mr. Brown advised that the County Council's revenue budget had now been prepared and was due to be set in February. Cuts to front-line services have been kept to a minimum and it is hoped there will be no increase in the County's element of the Council Tax. £60m in savings has been found from internal/management services and the remaining £20m from front-line services.

The County Council is to receive £51m to support its capital programme.

All south east councils are fighting to get changes to the Area Cost Adjustment formula used for setting the government grants to local authorities.

3.

Finally, the County Council has lost £240k to the South Downs National Park for the planning services relating to the likes of docks, harbours and quarries previously administered by the County Council but now to be controlled by the SDNP.

4. DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMENTARY

Mrs. Caird reported that the grant settlement for this year has been reduced from the equivalent of 50% of the total funds needed to just 4.4%, so spending needs to be cut drastically. The grant settlement is likely to be further reduced by 2013. The South Downs national Park is taking £1.085m from their budget to cover the costs of planning services, although some of this will be repaid to the District Council for providing some of those services, but the amount is unknown. The government has also removed £46k from the District Council as they think they pay for the repair of private drains, although they don't.

Referring to anti-social behaviour in the village, Mrs. Caird advised that a meeting is to be held with the Police next Tuesday where the matter will be discussed, with a view to finding ways of dealing with the problem.

Hawksfold Industrial Estate has generated a number of emails from concerned residents adjoining the site, who believe there are activities there for which there is no planning permission. The planning enforcement team have asked for a planning application to be submitted for those activities on the site that do not comply with their present permission.

West Sussex County Council has been found, upon inspection, to be inadequate in looking after children in the county.

Mr. Hudson commented on how good the refuse collection service had been over the Christmas period and this view was shared by others at the meeting.

5. ST. MAGNUS

The Chairman read out a statement, attached at Annex 'A', setting out the position regarding the draft report that he had written regarding an incident at St. Magnus in July 2010. It was proposed by Mr. Cottam and seconded by Mr. Brown that the statement be approved and adopted by the Parish Council. Carried.

Residents who attended the meeting were disappointed that the report was not to be published but generally understood the reasons for that decision. A Marley Common residents group were to meet with a representative of St. Magnus to discuss future arrangements in the event of a similar incident occurring.

Mr. Shaw considered it wrong that the report should be seen by councillors and not by residents and suggested that he could apply for its release under the Freedom of Information Act. The Chairman replied that was not the case as it had been made clear from the outset that it was a draft report not intended for publication unless that was agreed by St. Magnus, which it had not so done.

Mr. Shaw then added that the residents appreciated the work the Parish Council had put in on their behalf. The Chairman replied that the residents group could, of course, continue what they were doing to obtain an acceptable outcome.

Mrs. Caird added that a letter had been sent to Mr. Andrew Tyrie concerning the matter, but a reply had not yet been received.

Mr. Chapman said that the report had highlighted the problems and the work in preparing it had made various bodies, including the Police, to pay more attention to the situation.

The Chairman concluded by suggesting that someone from the Marley Common area should stand to be elected at the forthcoming parish council elections, so that their area was better represented.

6. CORRESPONDENCE/OTHER MATTERS

From	Subject
WSCC	Mobile Library Review. Noted.
Mr. & Mrs. Hudson/Mr. & Mrs. Turner	Thanks for Christmas party. Noted.
Fernhurst Primary School	Thanks for grant. Noted.
Savills	Syngenta site public exhibition – 19 th January – 5.30 to 8.30 at Fernhurst Village Hall. Noted.
WSCC	Salt bags/Winter Management Plan. Noted.
SALC	Clerks' networking day – 9 th March. Proposed by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Chapman that the Clerk may attend at a fee of £47.50 + VAT. Carried.
Dept. for Communities & Local Gov.	Abolition of Standards Board. Noted.
W.S. Fire & Rescue	Fire Service review. Noted.
SALC	Meeting with the South Downs National Park – 2 nd February at Arundel. Noted.
WSCC	Road Closure – Lickfold Road from 21 st January for 10 weeks. Noted.
WSCC	Closure of footpath no. 1095 from 11 th January for 21 days. Noted.
WSCC	Consultation on Changes to Adults' Social Care. Agreed that a response prepared by Mrs. Tyler should be sent.
Chichester District Council	Consultation on Biodiversity Action Plan 2011 – 2014. To Mr. Brown.
Chichester District Council	Parish Elections – May 2011. The Clerk advised that nomination papers may be obtained from him at the appropriate time.

Mr. D. Wells

Request to carry our metal detection on Van Common.
Proposed by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Cottam that approval be given in principle, but that conditions need to be made. Carried.

Items Available for Reading

WSSC	Forward Plan of Key Decisions.
Western Sussex Hospitals	Newsletter – November.
Local Council Review	Winter 2010.
Chichester District Council	Government’s indicative spending settlement.
SALC	Winter bulletin – 2010.
Ramblers Association	Newsletter – January 2011.
English Rural Housing Association	Newsletter – Winter 2010.
‘Clerks and Councils Direct	January 2011 edition.
‘The Clerk’	January 2011 edition.
Midhurst Rother College	Newsletter – December 2010.

7. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Cottam reported that the Youth Club had written a letter of thanks for the £152.67 raised by donations at the Christmas lights event.

Mr. Cottam and Mr. Peter Hudson had been invited to attend a meeting at Midhurst Police Station to discuss the ‘Streetwatch’ scheme. Both will be attending.

Neighbourhood Watch had been receiving a constant flow of reports from the Police about petty burglary, mainly from garden sheds and vehicles.

Mr. Cottam is unable to attend the next meeting of the County Local Committee at Petworth. Mr. Brown offered to attend.

8. MONTHLY EXECUTIVE REPORTS/COMMITTEE MATTERS

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

a) Payments

It was proposed by Mr. Chapman and seconded by Mrs. Timms that the list of payments and cheques shown at Annex ‘B’ be approved and signed. Carried.

Receipts

See schedule attached at Annex ‘B’.

c) Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk presented a bank reconciliation report, attached at Annex ‘C’, which was accepted.

d) Monthly Budget Report

The Clerk presented the report, shown at Annex 'D', which was accepted.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

It was proposed by Mrs. Braithwaite and seconded by Mr. Chapman that the minutes of the meetings held on 29th November and 6th December 2010 be signed as correct. Carried.

Planning Applications

FH/10/05286/DOM - Mr. & Mrs. K. Harding, 41, Nappers Wood, Fernhurst, Haslemere. Construction of extension to rear of property and front entrance porch.

It was proposed by Mr. Chapman and seconded by Mrs. Braithwaite that the Parish Council recommends approval of the application. Carried.

FH/10/05475/ELD - Mr. J. Forsyth, Hurstfold Industrial Estate, Surney Hatch Lane, Fernhurst, Haslemere. Laying out part of access road forming part of planning permission FH/09/03594/FUL.

It was proposed by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Cottam that the Parish Council has no objection to the application. Carried.

PROPERTY, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Mr. Self had written an article for the Fernhurst News about snow and potholes. He also reported a problem with blocked drains at Hogs Hill.

Mrs. Barnes had reported to Mr. Self a problem of flooding on part of Van Common. He would look into this and ask Mr. Barnes for advice on resolving the problem.

FERNHURST RECREATION GROUND

Nothing to report.

9. UPDATES ON LOCAL ISSUES

a) Services for young people and the Youth Club

Mr. Cottam advised that a piece had been written for the Fernhurst News regarding young people joining Fernhurst Club, for which the Parish Council had agreed to pay the joining fees.

b) Fernhurst Village Hall

Nothing to report.

c) Policing

Nothing to report.

7.

d) Fernhurst Primary School and Pre-School

Nothing to report.

10. QUESTIONTIME FOR PARISHIONERS

Mr. Self commented that he felt there had been insufficient discussion on the St. Magnus issue during the meeting. The Chairman replied that he had invited questions before the statement was approved by the Parish Council.

Mr. Hudson asked whether the Parish Council would support the idea of street parties on the occasion of the forthcoming Royal Wedding and was advised that it would positively encourage them.

Mrs. Turner advised that the Fernhurst Revels will be held on Sunday May 15th.

Mrs. Turner suggested that whilst the Christmas party was most enjoyable, perhaps in these difficult economic times it may be preferable in future to reduce expenditure by having a lower-key event. This will be considered when planning this year's party.

Mr. Brown suggested an annual award to someone in the community who had done outstanding voluntary work in the parish. This will be considered.