

## Minutes of the meeting of Fairfield Parish Council held in Fairfield Community Hall on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2014 at 7:30 pm

**Councillors present:** B E Dack (Chairman), V C Batten, C Bidwell, P Daffarn, P Mitchinson and G H Smith

**Officer present:** Katrina Henshaw (Parish Clerk)

**Also present for all or part of the meeting:** Ward Members Councillor B Saunders and five members of the public.

### **228 Apologies for Absence**

228.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor N P Hanks (work commitment) and Ward Members Councillor G Clarke (Holiday).

### **229 Disclosures of Interest**

229.1 No disclosures of interest were received.

### **230 Council Minutes**

230.1 Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014 had been circulated to all councillors and it was

#### **RESOLVED**

**That these minutes be agreed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed by the Chairman.**

### **231 Public Participation**

231.1 No member of the public requested to speak.

### **232 Parish Crime Update**

232.1 PCSO Lisa Antoine advised that between 11<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> November there was two new recorded crime; a theft from a dwelling in Charlotte Avenue and a handheld device stolen from a person outside their property in Faraday Gardens.

### **233 Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Members Report**

233.1 Councillor Saunders reminded FPC of the Town and Parish Councils Conference on 20<sup>th</sup> January. He advised the School Admissions 2016/17 consultation finishes 19<sup>th</sup> January and the 2015 /16 Budget Consultation runs between 6<sup>th</sup> January and 3<sup>rd</sup> February. The Highways Stewards are now under CBC control rather than Amey. He also reported that following recent fires in Bedfordshire, the Fire Authority were strongly recommending people only had solar panels fitted by qualified fitters.

## 234 Defibrillator in Fairfield

234.1 FPC have signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

## 235 Bus shelter at bus stop on Dickens Boulevard

235.1 To be installed by January 2015.

## 236 Maps

236.1 Ordnance Survey has advised that they update any changes within six months of being notified. FPC has requested a copy of a printed OS master map, Topography, of Fairfield to see if any amendments still need to be made. Councillor Bidwell to check map. **Action: CB**

## 237 Cricket Ground pathway

237.1 In response to a request from a resident to have some low level lighting fitted along the Cricket Ground pathway, FPC agreed to talk to the Cricket Club (and Hotbed depending upon the lease the Cricket Club) to ask their permission for FPC to investigate lighting. **Action: KH**

## 238 Grass cutting

238.1 MBS is measuring the grass verges so CBC can calculate the contribution it will pay FPC to take over responsibility for. FPC has asked CBC to back date this to December 2013 as that is when the initial request was submitted. **Action: KH**

238.2 FPC had established that Scanlans had a rolling contract with MBS that ran from 1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> June and was last put out to tender in 2013. Due to the overlap of work, it would not be cost effective to use a different contractor to cut the grass FPC requires cutting. Following a discussion it was

### **RESOLVED**

**To award MBS the contract for cutting the grass to road verges and beds around the trees until 30th June 2015.**

### **REASON**

**MBS has not increased its prices and offered an excellent service for the past twelve months so FPC was satisfied best value was still being given. A six month contract was agreed so FPC is in line with the Scanlans contract so the whole contract can be put to tender at the same time.**

The clerk to send a contract. **Action: KH**

## 239 Dog bins

239.1 Following a discussion it was

### **RESOLVED**

**To award MBS the contract for emptying two dog bins until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015.**

### **REASON**

**MBS has not increased its prices and offered an excellent service for the past twelve months so FPC was satisfied best value was still being given. A six month contract was agreed so FPC is in line with the Scanlans contract so the whole contract can be put to tender at the same time.**

The clerk to send a contract. **Action: KH**

## 240 Road gritting

240.1 Following a discussion it was

### **RESOLVED**

**To award MBS the contract to supply and spread rock salt to all roads agreed until 30th June 2015.**

### **REASON**

**MBS has not increased its prices and offered an excellent service for the past twelve months so FPC was satisfied best value was still being given. A six month contract was agreed so FPC is in line with the Scanlans contract so the whole contract can be put to tender at the same time.**

The clerk to send a contract. **Action: KH**

240.2 FPC to draft a Winter Maintenance Plan. **Action: NH**

## 241 Bannatyne Advertising board

241.1 The posts still remain in place and no planning application has been received. CBC has advised Bannatyne has planning permission but this was in fact for a sign that has already been erected. The clerk to advise CBC. **Action: KH**

## 242 High Speed Broadband

242.1 Nothing new to report.

## 243 The Parish Plan / The Neighbourhood Plan

243.1 Councillor Mitchinson reported that the deadline for completed questionnaires was 28<sup>th</sup> November. 226 had been completed on line and 331 hard copies had been received which meant that there was over 50% who had responded. The hard copies are currently being inputted before the results can be analysed.

## 244 Signs at Tesco

244.1 These have been installed.

## 245 Leisure Strategy

245.1 The map is still not available.

## 246 Section 106 Agreement – Disputed ownership and possible transfer of land.

246.1 The Rt Hon Alistair Burt, MP chaired a meeting between CBC (*Jason Longhurst, Director of Regeneration and Business, Andrew Emerton, Managing Lawyer, Peter Keates, Head of Building Control and Sally Wileman - Service Development Manager*), FPC (*Councillors Dack, Bidwell and Mitchinson*), FHMC (*Terry Glockler, Colin Chatfield, Sharon Jones and Linda Manktelow*) and PJ Livesey (*Wilf Larder, Director, John Williamson, Director and Bill Bayliss, Group Architect*) on 28<sup>th</sup> November. The meeting dealt in detail with the defaults caused by a failure to impose building regulations at the hall as well as the deficiencies in the 106 Agreement. It was very frank and open meeting at which both the developer and CBC came in for severe criticism from Mr Burt. Both developers and CBC were left in no doubt that there had been serious failings on both their part. PJ Livesey claimed they were acting for Hotbed Investments and promised to go back and look into everything. Certain promises and assurances were made by them. A timetable was agreed to progress each item and Mr Burt said he intends having a second, follow-up meeting with all parties in February preceded with one with FPC in January.

246.2 Councillor Dack has also received a phone call from Kate Bailey, a previous employee of PJ Livesey who now works for them as a consultant among other organisations. She advised that she has been given the 106 matters to sort out and Bill Bayliss, who was present at the meeting, will be in charge of the defects at Fairfield Hall. Kate is very aware of the history, aims and ideals of Fairfield and would like to meet FPC in the New Year.

246.3 It was agreed that FPC will arrange a meeting with the Directors of FHMC to discuss these issues. **Action: KH**

246.4 Following a discussion it was

#### **RESOLVED**

**To delegate powers to Councillors between meetings if decisions are needed on S106 issues. A minimum of three Fairfield Parish Councillors need to be present at any meeting to make decisions and these decisions must be recorded at the following FPC meeting.**

#### **REASON**

**To prevent unnecessary delays in getting S106 matters resolved.**

### **247 Orchard Plan**

247.1 The East Orchard has been cleared to ground level and already looks much improved. Work in part of the West Orchard will start next week. Councillor Bidwell and/or Councillor Dack met with three contractors all who had something different to offer. However, as the land is still owned by the developers, FPC agreed any agreement to spending public money would need considerable caution. All three contractors agreed that waiting another year wouldn't make much of a difference and suggested putting chicken wire or a form or tubing to protect the trees. Maydencroft has quoted to produce a specification and it was agreed to also ask BRCC to quote to produce one. **Action: KH**

247.2 It was agreed to arrange another meeting for the Friends of the Orchard Group in January. To make sure the enthusiasm of the volunteers was not lost, it was suggested involving them in putting the chicken wire or tubing around the trees, increasing the height of where the ivy has been cut and numbering the trees to produce a map so they can be easily identified. **Action: BD**

### **248 Public Art Money (S106)**

248.1 FPC met with Wendy Briggs (Artist appointed by CBC) who is now working on a draft design. The next meeting is scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2014.

### **249 Transferring Community Hall to FPC**

249.1 Templars Building Surveyors has supplied the report. Councillor Mitchinson to look at. **Action: PM**

### **250 Disaster Plan**

250.1 Councillor Batten is arranging for Mark Conway, CBC Emergency Planning Officer to deliver an Assistance Centre Training Course in the New Year. Councillor Batten and Councillor Bidwell to find out where to store the kit within the Community Hall. Councillor Bidwell to purchase head torches and rechargeable hand held lamps. **Action: VB / CB**

## 251 Welcome to Fairfield' booklet

251.1 Councillor Daffarn advised that the booklet would give a short history of Fairfield and an overview of FPC, FHMC, FHRA, FPRA and Middlemarch Resident Company and will suggest visiting the FPC website for current information. The booklet will be given to Estate Agents to distribute to new residents but will also be available on the website as a PDF. Councillor Daffarn will distribute draft to all parish councillors and is open to suggestions. Councillor Daffarn to ask for a quote from Chris Brown to design the leaflet. **Action: PD**

## 252 Joint meeting with Management Companies and Resident Associations

252.1 The meeting took place on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November at 7.00 pm and meeting notes have been distributed.

## 253 Meeting with Fairfield Lower School

253.1 FPC to arrange the meeting in the New Year. **Action: KH**

## 254 Meeting with the owner of the Chapel

254.1 The owner has agreed to meet with FPC. Date to be arranged. **Action: KH**

## 255 Post box collection

255.1 The post box in Dickens Boulevard now only has one collection a day which is at 9.00 am. FPC to write to Royal Mail as this is not satisfactory. **Action: KH**

## 256 Advertisement around Fairfield

256.1 There is an ever growing amount of advertising Estate agent boards in Fairfield as some are being used to advertise forthcoming events. CBC has advised that permission for advertising and sale boards is granted via CBC planning team for certain adverts. CBC also has powers to insist objects are removed from highway street furniture, railings, lamp columns, etc. on adopted roads. It was agreed to speak to the school at the next meeting to request some consideration when advertising school events. **Action: BD**

## 257 Burial

257.1 One thing that Fairfield residents lost when splitting from Stotfold was the residents' price to use the cemetery in Stotfold. This will become effective from two years after the split (May 2015). FPC can either do nothing, create a new cemetery or approach a neighbouring cemetery and offer to contribute an annual fee to ensure that Fairfield residents receive a reduced price. It was agreed for Councillor Smith to speak to Stotfold to discuss. **Action: GS**

## 258 Planning Applications

258.1 CB/14/03997/FULL Former Pig Unit, Hitchin Road  
Demolition of all existing buildings and dwellings. Mixed use development comprising 1400sqm B1 offices, children's nursery, 70 bedroom care home, 96 dwellings, access, parking, open space and ancillary works.  
Comments to CBC by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014.

CB/14/04048/FULL Former Pig Unit, Hitchin Road  
Demolition of all existing buildings and dwellings. Erection of 116 dwellings and a 70 bedroom care home with access, parking, open space and ancillary works  
Comments to CBC by 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

FPC gave residents the opportunity to view the plans and make comments on the applications. FPC made the following comments to the above applications.

### **Amenity**

As far as amenity is concerned there is no impact on the neighbours as there are none other than one or two isolated houses further up the road. We are told that the developer has contacted the residents in those houses and they have no issues with the development proposals.

In the main the existing tree belts are maintained and in fact reinforced around the three main boundaries thus continuing to shield the appearance of the site from the surrounding land.

The additional housing may well impact on the existing schools but we understand that considerable S106 contributions will assist in overcoming that issue.

**No objections.**

### **Design**

The design now compares favourably with the design features on Fairfield Park. The treatment of car parking and road widths and traffic calming are different but they needed to be so no objection there.

The housing size mix seems well balanced and the tenure ratio more or less meets CBC requirements. The intermediate housing they refer to in the application is shared ownership or even shared equity. They have not discussed the exact mix of affordable housing yet with CBC.

**No objections.**

### **Highways**

Pedestrian and cycle accessibility to the site, including the style and number of road crossings and the impact of additional traffic on the roundabout at the junction of Hitchin Road and the A505 are all issues.

FPC have already noted their concerns regarding discrepancies between the transport plan and the drawings in an e-mail dated 17<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

After the initial look at the applications, FPC would like to ask CBC to request that the applicant revise and correct their Transport Assessment.

‘There is a fundamental error in the methodology which has been utilised to assess the capacity of the Hitchin Road / A507 roundabout and therefore the impact of the development traffic has not been correctly assessed. The consultant has presented a theoretical capacity analysis based upon traffic surveys, however they have not calibrated their model based upon actual recorded queue lengths.

Their model suggests that there are at present peak hour queues of no more than 3 vehicles on any arm of the roundabout, which illustrates that the model is not fit for purpose, as it is clear from any peak hour visit to the junction that there are frequent queues well in excess of that and often in excess of 15-20 vehicles on more than one arm.

FPC would suggest that the applicant must revise their analysis and that the capacity analysis must be calibrated and validated against actual queue lengths.

At present the analysis provided is a misrepresentation of both the existing operation of the highway network and of the impact associated with the development.

FPC note also that there are inconsistencies between the application drawings and the Transport Assessment with respect to the type of pedestrian crossing proposed on Hitchin Road, with the drawings suggesting a traffic signal controlled or ‘zebra’ type crossing and the Transport Assessment suggesting that only dropped kerbs and pedestrian refuge islands would be installed. FPC would suggest that to facilitate safe movement of the volumes of pedestrian traffic associated with the development and in particular vulnerable road users such as school children and the elderly, a traffic signal controlled crossing is necessary’.

Further to these initial comments, it has been noted that the dwellings span the catchment areas for two local primary schools, one in Fairfield and one in Stotfold. This means that pedestrian accessibility to both sites must be suitable and safe. Traffic signal controlled pedestrian crossings should be installed to the north and south of the proposed site access on Hitchin Road, to safely facilitate pedestrian movements toward Stotfold as well as Fairfield.

The width of the shared footway / cycleway running along the western side of Hitchin Road has also been raised as a concern, as it is currently sub-standard (according to CBC Design Supplement 7 a minimum width of 3m should be provided). This route should therefore be widened in association with the proposed highway works.

### Objections as noted

### Policies and History

The site currently benefits from an existing outline planning consent for the development of a business park with B1, B2 and B8 uses together with the replacement of 5 detached houses.

Both these applications change the land use to predominantly residential with two different levels of employment provision. There was doubt cast about the viability of the offices and nursery provision being attractive in the market place but generally the increased residential use would be a more favourable use than the current consent.

### No objection

## 259 Planning Decisions

259.1 CB/14/03853/FULL 26 Fleming Drive  
Single storey side extension  
**CBC granted full planning permission 18th November 2014**

259.2 CB/14/03783/FULL 34 Shaftesbury Drive  
Single storey rear/side extension  
**CBC granted full planning permission 18th November 2014**

## 260 Finance

260.1 Councillors were provided with details of payments totally £965.40 and it was

### RESOLVED

**That all monies on the payments list be paid and the receipts be noted.**

260.2 Update on accounts 2014/15 showing expenditure against the budget.

	Budget 2014/15 inc bf	Additional Income	Spent to 28/11	Money allocated	Balance
Administration	£ 35,343.79	£ -	£ 8,928.39	£ 1,082.94	£ 25,332.46
Recreation and Public Lands	£ 64,228.86	£ -	£ 11,538.13	£ 12,878.00	£ 39,812.73
Parish Plan	£ 20,000.00	£ -	£ 3,498.00	£ -	£ 16,502.00
Parking	£ 15,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 15,000.00
Grants	£ 10,580.00	£ -	£ 9,321.66	£ 357.50	£ 900.84
Reserves	£ 20,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 20,000.00
Interest	£ 105.21	£ 119.80	£ -	£ -	£ 225.01
Vat	-£ 42.14	£ 2,141.22	£ 2,936.17	£ -	-£ 837.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 165,215.72</b>	<b>£ 2,261.02</b>	<b>£ 36,222.35</b>	<b>£ 14,318.44</b>	<b>£116,935.95</b>

### 260.3 Budget 2015/16

Following a discussion it was

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the budget for 2015/16 would be set at £88,940. This would give a 0% increase to Band D Council Tax per parish per resident. The budget was set as follows:-**

<b>Budget 2015/16</b>	
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Total</b>
Administration	£ 10,000.00
Recreation and Public Lands	£ 38,940.00
Parish Plan / Neighbourhood Plan <i>inc any projects identified from questionnaire</i>	£ 15,000.00
Parking	£ -
Grants	£ 15,000.00
Reserves	£ 10,000.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£ 88,940.00</b>

#### **REASON**

**To start building funds so FPC can provide facilities for amenities for the community at some point.**

The clerk to advise CBC. **Action: KH**

### **261 Correspondence**

261.1 **CBC – Reporting potholes online made easy.**

261.2 **Letters from FHRA / FHMC regarding Councillor Smith comments regarding the grant application for the proposed memorial garden.**

In response to the letters received addressed to the Chairman, Cllr Smith explained that his intention was definitely not to be vindictive towards the residents of the Hall and he only challenged the costs supplied as he was following best value principles and practises to ensure residents received the best services at the best prices. He was saddened that his intentions have been misinterpreted and he apologised if his approach at a Public Meeting caused any offence to anyone. The full statement is detailed in Appendix A.

### **262 Date of next meeting**

262.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at 7.30 pm.

Meeting closed at 8.55 pm



## Appendix A. Item 261.2 of Fairfield Parish Council minutes for the meeting held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

Following the receipt of two letters from Directors of The Hall I wish to make an apology

Those of you who have lived here for the past five or six years, will know that with others I worked long and hard to bring this Council into existence. One of our principle objectives was to provide one, unified voice, to represent all residents in Fairfield. This remains my own greatest wish and one I am sure that I share with my fellow Councillors

When I spoke at the last meeting I certainly did not intend anything I said to be seen as directed to any one person, and certainly not to be seen as vindictive. I am saddened that my intentions have been misinterpreted and I apologise if my approach at a Public Meeting caused any offence to anyone.

Certainly I spoke out forcefully to reflect the strong feelings I have on the subject. My motivation was to ensure a fair outcome for Fairfield and not intended to be prejudiced in any way. As a Councillor I try to follow best value principles and practises to ensure residents receive the best services at the best prices and will challenge all costs before making a decision. Perhaps some elements of truth have got buried in all the protestations

Once again I apologise for any offence given.

**Councillor G H Smith**