

Minutes of the meeting of Fairfield Parish Council held in Fairfield Community Hall on Thursday 9th February 2017 at 7:30 pm

Councillors present: C Bidwell (Chairman), B E Dack, P Daffarn, N P Hanks and S L Jones.

Officer present: Katrina Henshaw (Parish Clerk)

Also present for all or part of the meeting: PC Sally Bonham, PCSO Amy Bradley, Ward Member Councillor S Dixon and eight members of the public.

235 Apologies for Absence

235.1 Apologies were received from Councillor T Milliken (holiday) and Ward Member Councillor B Saunders.

236 Disclosures of Interest and Dispensation requests

236.1 No disclosures of interest and no requests for dispensation were received.

237 Council Minutes

237.1 Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th January 2017 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.

238 Public Participation

238.1 No member of the Public requested to speak.

239 Police Report from PC Sally Bonham and PCSO Amy Bradley

239.1 FPC should be receiving monthly crime figures. PC Bonham would make enquiries as to why this was not happening.

239.2 In the Rural Community Team there has been once additional PC and two new PCSOs. There are no further plans to increase this Team.

239.3 Councillor Jones asked what could be done about the recent report of post being stolen from some residents of the Hall. The resident who had reported seeing someone with bundles of post was told that no action could be taken as there was no victim (no one had reported theft of their post as they did not know if something they weren't expecting had been stolen). PC Bonham was surprised at this as she understood that theft of post was a crime and should be reported as such. PC Bonham agreed to look into this further.

239.4 Parking around Fairfield is an ongoing issues and PC Bonham has looked at some photos she recently received showing examples of inconsiderate parking. She has sent an advisory letter to the registered owners informing them of the regulations regarding parking.

She is concerned that it appears the markings on the road encourage dangerous parking, in that on the bends of the junctions coming off the roundabouts the road surface is changed to brick paving which suggest this is a lay-by for parking. She has seen up to two vehicles parked on each location, they are not obstructing the highway but are parked on a corner which goes against the Highway Code. She encouraged FPC to speak to request CBC to request the road is clearly marked with yellow lines or something to indicate parking is prohibited. CBC has the authority to issue parking tickets but the police can move vehicles on if it is dangerous parking or the road is marked appropriately. The police are happy to write letters or take action based on photographic evidence supplied.

It was acknowledged that new parking orders would take at least six months so it was suggested that the Police and FPC send joint letters to residents asking them to park considerably.

239.5 It was agreed to arrange 'Operation Beneke' in Fairfield. Police spend three hours in an area tackling issues like crime prevention, speeding and parking. The mobile police station is on site where police are available to give advice and can discuss Neighbourhood Watch and Speed Watch. FPC requested a weekend.

239.6 Residents are also encouraged to sign up for Beds Alert. FPC advised Fairfield is not separated from Stotfold and this has created problems in the past when trying to act quickly. PC Bonham agreed to speak to the communications team as she agreed Fairfield should be treated as a standalone parish.

240 Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Members Report

240.1 The recommended budget includes ways to reduce spending by £15.2million, apply the Adult Social Care precept of an increase in Council Tax of 3% to contribute towards funding for care service and increase Council Tax by 1.549% to contribute towards funding of other services.

240.2 Hitchin Road Speed limit – There is a consultation to replace the 40 mph speed limit with 30 mph speed limit on part of Hitchin Road, Fairfield. Comments should be sent in writing to the Traffic Management team e-mail by 14 February 2017. FPC requested that the 30mph is extended to the A507 as a constant speed on a road was more likely to be adhered to.
Action: KH

240.3 Sustainability and Transformation Plan – NHS colleagues are working with local authorities to develop Sustainability and Transformation plans to shape the future of local health services. Further details are available on the BLMKSTP website <http://www.blmkstp.co.uk/>. It was agreed that FPC should support the proposals especially having land allocated for a medical hub to be nurse led or pharmacist led if doctors were not available. **Action: BD**

240.4 Allotments, Recreation Space, Football Pitch and Cemetery – CBC is considering proposals from FPC following the meeting last month.

240.5 Update of Postal Address – The Rt Hon Alistair Burt, MP has received another rejection to the request to amend addresses in Fairfield to omit Stotfold. As this makes no sense at all The RT Hon Alistair Burt, MP is requesting an explanation.

240.6 Faulty street lighting – Councillor Dixon advised that from 1st April there will be a new system to report faulty street lights.

240.7 Safety issues around the school – Councillor Dixon met with the Road Safety Officer and was advised that Fairfield does not meet the criteria for a School Crossing Patrol Officer but FPC (with a sponsor) could look to fund one. Cost is approximately £4,000 pa. CBC would employ the Officer and would provide training, equipment and insurance. FPC to discuss with the School at the meeting later this month and FPC will discuss this further at the March meeting.
Action: CB / BD

240.8 Planning Issues – Councillor Dixon has advised CBC Planning that the removal of the shop, doctors' surgery and pub/restaurant from the new development on Land East of Hitchin Road is unacceptable.

240.9 Former Pig Unit, Hitchin Road – This was approved under condition 14 attached to the permission & included details of a wheel wash facility on site. A site visit by CBC revealed that there is no such facility and Crest Nicholson have been asked to resolve this matter as mud is being transferred onto the highway.

240.10 Update on Letchworth Sewage Treatment Works – CBC is very grateful to FPC and residents for support with this case. Anglian Water has appealed the abatement notice CBC served on Wednesday 8th December 2016. There are only guidelines for the management of odour which states that Anglian Water is obliged to use best practical means to suppress the odour. AW can argue they have used best practical means and CBC can argue they have not. CBC therefore need a totally defensible case if the case goes to court.

CBC is in the best position to take action. FPC is not (and cannot be) party to this action. However, if it goes to court, FPC may be called by CBC as a witness. FPC has taken (and will continue to take) independent legal advice.

CBC has employed an independent expert. CBC asked for quotes from three people. One declined as he felt he could not complete all the brief but the other two have quoted. However, this is to give independent advice only. FPC has asked why it did not include independent testing and were advised that the fee went up too much. FPC is waiting to hear what the increase in cost is and if FPC offered to meet this extra was it allowable within the rules surrounding finance. Following a discussion it was

AGREED

That FPC will offer to contribute to this report if it provides the scientific evidence and a budget of £10,000 was set.

REASON

FPC think it is vital to have this evidence regardless of if the case goes to court.

Ward Councillor Dixon, Councillors Bidwell and Dack, Peter Nash and Nick Reynolds (FPRA) did an unannounced site visit and was shown the whole site. As had been suspected, a secondary source for the smell was located whilst on site. This secondary source is at a high level. We believe the loggers had all been placed at ground level and none at the secondary source level above the ground. (The height of the larger round storage units adjacent to the centrifuge).

FPC has also written a second letter to Anglian Water CEO and is awaiting a response.

FPC has received an invitation from Anglian Water Public Relations Manager to arrange an opportunity for Anglian Water's local operational team and the PR manager to meet with the full Parish council and residents, perhaps on-site, to update everyone on the plans for ongoing investment and improvements on-site and timelines.

The Rt Hon Alistair Burt, MP is aware of these problems and is supporting CBC and FPC with action against Anglian Water.

241 Meeting with the Rt Hon Alistair Burt

241.1 Councillor Bidwell attended the parish meeting on 4th February.

The problem of the smell from Letchworth Sewage Treatment Works is widely known and The RT Hon Alistair Burt, MP was very supportive.

The Rt Hon Alistair Burt, MP will be holding a meeting on the White Paper on Monday 5th June and further details will be available soon. This will include information of S106 and the effectiveness of Planning Officers.

Antisocial behaviour and parking are a problem around Bedfordshire and The RT Hon Alistair Burt, MP is speaking to the Chief Constable and the Bedfordshire Police & Crime Commissioner regarding these issues.

Speeding was discussed and many parishes had a Speed Watch Scheme. Those with the scheme recommended it and advised that the Police offered good support.

242 Amended monthly meeting Dates 2017

242.1 It was agreed to amend the following monthly meetings to 16th March, 20th April and 6th July.

243 Annual Parish Meeting 1st June 2017

243.1 It was agreed to invite The RT Hon Alistair Burt, MP.

244 Orchards

244.1 Following a discussion and the adoption of the maintenance plan subject to amendments on 13th October 2016 (item 132.4) it was

RESOLVED

To adopt the 'Management Plan for Fairfield Orchard' with the amendments as agreed.

REASON

To maintain the Orchard as per the wishes of Fairfield residents

244.2 FPC has requested three quotations for the site clearance on West Orchard where developers had left rubble which appears to be concrete but is unknown. Due to the nature of the job and the uncertainty of what will be found it was difficult to quote an exact figure. Following a discussion it was

RESOLVED

To give the contract to Shanahan Contractors and request they make the decision on what is safe and unsafe.

REASON

Shanahan Contractors have the skill to do this job and the local knowledge.

Councillor Dack to oversee the works and will seek a lower and upper before the contract is placed. Work must not be done during the bird nesting season. **Action: BD / KH**

244.3 FPC has requested three quotations to clear the dead tree, cut back the elders and remove further wood so that to open the area. Following a discussion it was

RESOLVED

To give the contract to MBS Ground Maintenance Ltd at a cost of 888.00 + vat.

REASON

MBS has local knowledge and can liaise with the tree experts.

Councillor Dack to oversee the works. Work must not be done during the bird nesting season. **Action: BD / KH**

245 Parking

245.1 Ongoing parking problems and the advice from the Police were discussed. It was agreed that Councillor Hanks would circulate a revised proposal for road markings and once agreed it would be sent to CBC for consideration. **Action: NH**

246 CCTV

246.1 FPC has received a new request for CCTV at Dickens Boulevard vehicular entrance to the park outside the gatehouse. This was discussed but it was agreed not to relook into CCTV as the installation costs and ongoing costs were extremely high.

247 Great Spring Clean 3 – 5 March

247.1 The Great British Spring Clean event was discussed and although FPC thought it was a good idea felt it was too short notice to organise an event in Fairfield. It was agreed to look into doing a clean-up in the summer.

248 Vacancy

248.1 There was two people nominated (Stephen Bangs and Steve Foster) for election. The Poll will take place between 7.00 am and 10.00 pm on 23rd February 2017 in the Community Hall.

249 Neighbourhood Plan

249.1 The CBC consultation finished on 20th January 2017. The plan and comments are now to be passed to an examiner. FPC asked if it could address the absence of land use but was advised by CBC that there is no requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan to allocate land for development, so CBC does not anticipate any problems at examination.

250 No Through Signs

250.1 The signs should be installed in February 2017.

251 Speed Watch

251.1 FPC is looking for volunteers to set this up and will advertise the scheme shortly.

252 Proposed North Herts Crematorium in Stotfold Road, Fairfield

252.1 NHDC has advised that the successful bidder will be responsible for ensuring that all planning requirements (surveys, drawings, plans etc.) are satisfied. This may or may not include an environmental report. Bidders are aware of the legal requirements concerning new crematoriums and boundaries. There's a minimum distance from property which they are also aware of. FPC will be automatically included as a consultee for any planning applications made, so would be kept informed by CBC during the process.

253 Transfer of land from Hotbed Investments

253.1 Hotbed is waiting for FHMC to advise the revised boundary proposals. This has been delayed due to two of the Directors being on holiday.

254 Three Counties Hospital memorabilia

254.1 The artefacts are now owned by FPC and thanks to Councillor Jones and her husband are being catalogued. Unfortunately they will not be displayed on 2nd March as the planned talk on the History of Fairfield has been cancelled.

255 Upgrade of Western Shelter Belt

255.1 The surfacing work on the bridleway has been completed.

256 Urban Park

- 256.1 Everyone was shown two detailed plans of a design that had been produced by Silke Gruner at no cost to Fairfield. It is a simple design which will be easy to maintain at low costs. It includes wild flowers, a stage and an area that could be used as a market. It meets the aim of making the area a focal point of Fairfield and fulfils the objectives in the Parish Plan. The initial cost is expected to be approximately £30,000 and FPRA will apply to FPC for a grant and to ask CBC if the remaining £8,000 from S106 Public Arts could be used for part of the project. FPRA need to establish if planning permission is needed for the stage. FPC discussed the plans and everyone was happy with them. FPRA will now consult with residents.

257 Bench

- 257.1 CBC has replaced the bench on Hitchin Road. As the Bench was originally the property of the FPC following it being given to them by Stotfold Town Council, the future up keep of the bench is the responsibility of FPC and not CBC. It has a value of £439. It is on FPC asset register and is covered by FPC insurance. As the bench was installed unlevel, FPC to ask for it to be levelled and at the same time request a litter bin adjacent to the bench. **Action: KH**

258 Bins being left out at Palmerston Way

- 258.1 Scanlans have written to residents reminding them to put bins away as per their covenants but this request has been ignored. Scanlans have added stickers to all offending bins and if these are ignored FPRA has asked that letters from solicitors are sent as this is continued blatant breach of the covenant.

259 Website

- 259.1 Councillor Dack advised that FPC had purchased an upgrade for the current theme but the developers had made this available before support was ready. Councillor Dack will be updating the website in due course. **Action: BD**

260 Joint Meeting with FPRA, MRC, FHMC and Fairfield Hall Hub.

- 260.1 The meeting was held on 2nd February 2017 and notes have been distributed. FPC requested that other organisations add agenda items as at the moment it is just a repeat of the FPC meetings.

261 Planning Applications

- 261.1 **CB/16/04272/FULL Former Pig Unit. Hitchin Road**
Erection of a care home (Use Class C2) with access, car parking, amenity space, landscaping and other associated works.
FPC had no objections.
- 261.2 **CB/17/00367/FULL 6 Nightingale Way**
Single storey rear/side extension.
- 261.3 **CB/17/00302/FULL 1 Franklin Place**
Two storey side (west) extension including additional single storey extension (east) for installation of bi folding doors. Enlargement of existing first floor bedroom window (east elevation) and bricking up of first floor bedroom window on west elevation.

262 Finance

262.1 Payments

To whom	Description	Total
Katrina Henshaw	January salary	£447.56
HMRC	January tax	£111.80
MBS	Grass verges - January	£706.00
MBS	Dog bins - January	£38.40
MBS	Grass outside Community Hall - January	£64.99
MBS	Fleming Drive - January	£38.00
MBS	Salisbury Close - January	£32.50
MBS	Dickens Boulevard roundabout	£264.00
Sparkx	Christmas lights	£2,928.00
Ebuyer	Printer toner	£120.99
EE	Mobile phone December	£44.98
EE	Mobile phone January	£44.98
Barrie Dack	Reimbursement for artefacts	£4,750.00
Sharon Jones	Reimbursement for artefacts	£53.89
Word Press	Website software upgrade	£57.75
Blandy and Blandy	Professional fees	£2,126.00
Total		£11,829.84

It was

RESOLVED

That payments of £11,829.42 be paid and £250 be transferred to the cash plus card.

263 Date of next meeting

263.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on 16th March 2017 at 7.30 pm

Meeting closed at 9.35 pm