

## Minutes of the meeting of Fairfield Parish Council held in Fairfield Community Hall on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 7:30 pm

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

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

**Also present for all or part of the meeting:** Ward Member Councillor B Saunders and 12 members of the public.

### 119 Apologies for Absence

119.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Foster (work commitments) and Ward Member Councillor S Dixon.

### 120 Disclosures of Interest and Dispensation requests

- 120.1 Councillor Hanks advised that his company is involved with Axiom Developments Limited so he will not be able to discuss or be involved in any future proposals from them.
- 120.2 Councillor Jones declared a pecuniary interest in items 19 and 20 of the agenda (items 137 and 138 of the minutes) so will not be present when these items are discussed.
- 120.3 No other disclosures of interest and no requests for dispensation were received.

### 121 Council Minutes

121.1 Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September 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.**

### 122 Public Participation Session

122.1 One member of the Public requested to speak on item 20 of the agenda Kingsley Avenue (item 138 of the minutes).

The member of public said he was surprised to see item 20 on the agenda as he understands there have only been three residents complain about the restriction of public access. He asked FPC to confirm if it is a legal requirement or its choice to take action. He also asked if given that pedestrian access will remain, if there was any point of FPC speaking to CBC and incurring extra costs. The chairman advised that his questions would be answered when the item was discussed.

## 123 Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Members Report

- 123.1 Highways – Nick Carofalo, CBC has inspected the broken bollards on Hitchin Road and the one on Dickens Boulevard and will arrange for these to be repaired. CBC is conscience however that outside the school the bollards being knocked over is a regular occurrence so CBC is looking at radical alternatives to try an increase the safety levels therein.

Councillor Dack reported that the bollard in Bronte Avenue also needs repairing and he has the bollard if CBC need it. Councillor Saunders agreed to pass this onto Highways. **Action: BS**

Nick Carofalo also advised that all the outstanding street light repairs that have been logged onto the system have been repaired where possible. If the outage is from a supply issue, these columns will take longer to bring back into service as CBC has to get the power supplier mobilised. A new system which allows ward councillors to interrogate reported faults/ repairs is being developed by Ringway Jacobs to hopefully assist the tracking of outstanding jobs by town/parish.

The highways portfolio holder, Councillor Dalgarno, has offered to attend the next FPC meeting to give an update on CBC contract position with Ringway Jacobs.

Councillor Dalgarno is asking officers for a process to report lights on a busy road. CBC strongly advise not stopping on the highway and requested to continue to report faulty lights through the usual channel until a new process is announced.

- 123.2 Speedwatch – Councillor Dixon has requested permission from the Police authority to carry out Speedwatch sessions on both Dickens Boulevard and Bronte Avenue. Councillor Saunders to confirm the Police contact details for FPC to book training sessions. **Action: BS**

- 123.3 Hall Completion Certificates – An update of CBC's position has recently been sent to the Hall Directors. The contents are not for disclosure in this forum other than to say that Councillor Dixon is still trying to meet with the developers to facilitate a conclusion to the matter.

- 123.4 CSAS – As stated before, this scheme is under discussion between CBC and the Police. Councillor Dixon asked if the outline of the scheme was of interest to FPC and has passed back FPC's broad support and comments on abandoned vehicles. Hopefully, if enough towns and parishes support the scheme and allow it to include the abandoned vehicle element that FPC would like to see. FPC confirmed interest.

- 123.5 Weed spraying – FPC's previous comments have been noted. Councillor Saunders agreed to ask for next dates for this and road sweeping. **Action: BS**

- 123.6 Local Plan – Last month, the Government's long awaited consultation which included new methodology for calculating housing need was published. The housing need figure for Central Bedfordshire that was generated by this standardised approach represents a 60% increase on CBC's current housing need calculation.

At Full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017, Members voted unanimously in support of a motion to robustly challenge the proposed new methodology through the consultation process, on the basis that it is neither deliverable nor reasonable.

As a responsible local authority, CBC need to also anticipate the possibility that the new methodology may be imposed. Were the Government to uphold its proposed methodology, this would apply to local authorities not proposing to submit Plans by 31 March 2018. In order to limit the negative implications of this it is now proposed that a timetable allows for consultation on the next version of the Local Plan in January 2018 and submission of the Local Plan in March 2018 should be pursued.

The full Executive paper is on the CBC website.

## 124 Orchards

- 124.1 FPC received a very thorough survey report from Bob Lever. Following a discussion it was agreed to accept the recommendations. The clerk to submit report to CBC for tree work approval as all have TPOs, to ask Bob Lever for his weekend availability and to ask Colin Carpenter to prepare a quotation on all items listed as arborist and volunteer. **Action: KH**

- 124.2 Councillor Daffarn met with Julia Scott, CBC, Cliff Andrews, BRCC and Wendy Briggs to discuss the art project for the remaining S106 money. Seats, information boards and nature trails were discussed and Wendy is keen to create a lit up trail for people to walk through and is considering 12<sup>th</sup> night. Wendy and Julia attended Apple Day and discussed these ideas with residents and will also be consulting with the school and youth club.
- 124.3 The Orchards East Bedfordshire Launch is on 11<sup>th</sup> November between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm at Fairfield Community Hall. Councillor Daffarn will be speaking on Fairfield Orchards. Councillor Dack to include in a FPC newsletter and on FPC website. **Action: BD**

## 125 Apple Day 2017

- 125.1 Income was £460.27 and expenditure was £808.55 meaning a cost of £348.28 to FPC. The day was very successful with many positive comments. It was very difficult to get volunteers on the day though. FPC thanked Councillor Daffarn for organising this and the Clerk to write to Councillor Daffarn and her husband Gavin. **Action: KH**

## 126 Area at the end of Eliot Way/Hardy Way

- 126.1 FPC has received 11 completed questionnaires from residents regarding the works earlier this year. Councillor Bidwell met with one of the residents to discuss his Environmentalist Report. Several areas of concerns were raised by the resident which Councillor Bidwell feels has some valid observations and should be openly addressed by FPC.

The resident did acknowledge that both his and FPC's report were similar stating they are the same in principles; to keep the bio diversity of the orchards and open space as much as possible to allow for the wildlife to return into the orchards and surrounding space.

It was agreed that the area did look worse following the clearing of rubble and the constructing of the earth mounds around the perimeter of the section of the orchards. This was mainly due to lack of rain and the delay by the contractor to clear stones which had come to the surface, which in turn allowed weeds and brambles to re-establish. Grass seed, including a wild flower mix, has recently be sowed.

Nearby residents felt the area looked worse and it should be allowed to go back to its natural state so that wild life can re-establish itself. Councillor Bidwell pointed out that the area is surrounded by other natural areas of land where wildlife has been allowed to remain and flourish, and this area has had very little impact on the surrounding wildlife. What has been completed to date is in line with FPC's plan for that area which has approval from CBC Ecologist.

Concerns have been expressed regarding the area where the stones have been deposited. This is in area out of sight from the footpath which runs between Eliot Way and West Drive. Councillor Bidwell proposed that this area is covered by new earth and allow the existing vegetation to grow over the mound. This solution is one which allows the area to cover and wildlife not to be disturbed more than necessary. It is estimated that 5 tons of soil would be required and two operatives to wheel barrow it in and spread over the area.

It was agreed that FPC will write to apologise to the 11 residents who completed the questionnaires. **Action: KH**

It was also agreed that FPC will improve how it communicates with local residents on future projects.

## 127 CBC – Rural Match Funding Application 2018/2019

- 127.1 CBC is now accepting applications for Rural Match funding for 2018/2017. All completed applications are submitted in full by Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018. FPC to discuss and agree what to apply for. It was agreed to apply for funding for some of FPC's road safety projects providing it would not delay the start of any works. Councillor Bidwell to clarify if there would be any potential delays. **Action: CB**

## 128 Signage at Eliot Way

- 128.1 Following a discussion about if additional signage is required to deter vehicles from trying to get to Arlesey via Eliot Way it was agreed that if the current signs didn't deter drivers it was unlikely additional ones would. FPC would ask the new developments to notify drivers that Eliot Way is a no through road. **Action: KH**

## 129 Chaos at Dickens Boulevard bus stop in the mornings

- 129.1 There is an ongoing dangerous problem at the bus stop every morning with school children running into the road. This has improved a little since the schools have spoken to the children but it still is a concern. A few suggestions included

- Railings to stop children being pushed into the road (although these could also stop children from getting out of the road too).
- Having the newly appointed Road Crossing Officer present.
- Parent Rota for supervision
- Stagger start times at schools
- Speedwatch at this time
- Ask schools if they can appoint an older child to be a prefect
- Ask schools to ensure parents are aware of the problem

It was agreed initially to

- Investigate barriers. **Action: NH**
- Ask if the Road Crossing Officer could be present. **Action: KH**
- Ask the school to notify parents of the problem. **Action: KH**

## 130 Request to purchase and install a phone box exchange library

- 130.1 Following a discussion it was agreed that FPC would investigate purchasing and installing a phone box exchange library.

The clerk to write to FRL for permission to install it on the corner of Urban Park (near the salt bins). **Action: KH.**

Councillor Bidwell to investigate what planning permission is require and cost up project. **Action: CB**

## 131 Christmas Lights

- 131.1 Lights have been ordered and will be installed before 1<sup>st</sup> December. Councillor Daffarn is waiting to hear from the school regarding decorating the tree on the Dickens Boulevard roundabout and will seek additional quotes for a cherry picker. **Action: PD**

## 132 Email and communications

- 132.1 Councillor Dack has been looking into email and FPC communications. With each passing year, the amount of storage FPC need grows both digitally and physical. FPC also need to keep abreast of the latest developments in communications.

Google's G suite is a system used by companies large and small. This would give FPC email usage, cloud storage up to 30 gigabyte per person as well as individual access to google docs FPC would also have a shared calendar for meetings, events, plus video/voice conferencing facilities. As well as individual storage, it does offer shared storage for large document and reports.

At the moment, FPC's email is included in its ISP hosting whereas if it moved to G Suite the cost would be £3.30 per person per month plus VAT. (£26.40 per month plus VAT).

Before a decision is made Councillor Hanks to obtain quotes for Cloud storage. **Action: NH**

### 133 Welcome Pack

- 133.1 It was agreed to create a Welcome Pack for new residents. Councillor Dack to coordinate this. **Action: BD**

### 134 Outdoor Gym

- 134.1 One of the “future’s” of the Neighbourhood plan was the provision of an outdoor gym. These are increasingly popular throughout the country. Councillor Foster to produce a feasibility study on the costs and proposals at a future meeting. **Action: SF**

### 135 Anglian Water

- 135.1 Councillor Dack has been attending the recent fortnightly meetings as Councillor Bidwell has been unavailable. The next meeting is 19<sup>th</sup> October which will be a site meeting hopefully seeing the completed works all functioning as expected. The site hasn't been causing any unpleasant smells recently so it is hoped that the problem has been solved. The June newsletter from Anglian Water stated they would make a donation to a community project. FPC will only discuss this once the problem is solved and FPC and CBC are satisfied that Anglian Water has met all the requirements of the abatement notice.

Some residents have received a letter from a solicitor who is investigating the possibility of acting on behalf of residents to pursue a civil claim against Anglian Water. FPC has advised the solicitor that the Parish Council is working with Anglian Water to resolve the issue affecting the parish community and Anglian Water has already kindly offered a level of compensation to the Parish, the sum yet to be agreed and that FPC will not discuss this until the problem is solved.

### 136 Neighbourhood Plan

- 136.1 The referendum was held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017 and the Plan was overwhelmingly accepted by 574 votes to 16 (97.3%). The turnout was 31%. Having a NHP guarantees FPC 25% of future S106 money in Fairfield.

As Councillor Jones had declared a pecuniary interest she left the meeting whilst items 137 and 138 were discussed.

### 137 Transfer of land from Hotbed Investments

- 137.1 Councillor Bidwell read a statement reminding councillors of the slow progress in dealing with this transfer. He is concerned that many residents of the Fairfield Hall are not fully conversant with the FPC proposals or rationale and have been given limited information on these by the Hall Directors. The recently printed comments made by the Chairman of the Hall Directors which is to be presented at the FHMC AGM included some statements directed towards FPC that do not help residents or assist both parties to proceed to an acceptable agreement and transfer.

Councillor Bidwell now feels it is time for FPC to fully inform the residents of the details of the situation and how FPC has tried to resolve the situation and have the land transferred to it and proposed that he, as Chairperson, should write an open letter to the residents of the Hall clearly stating the full facts surrounding the transfer listing each area, what is being offered to protect and secure the privacy and security of residents of the Hall's grounds as a whole. These offers have consistently been rejected by the Hall Directors involved with the transfer.

The letter will also reiterate how FPC has worked with several residents from the Hall in the compiling of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Green Infrastructure Plans and the Design Guide. These Plans clearly protects the environment surrounding the Halls and the green open spaces in front of the Hall.

Following a discussion it was agreed that the Chairman should send a letter to all residents of the hall who are included on the electoral roll. **Action: CB**

### 138 Kingsley Avenue

- 138.1 FPC has received complaints from residents regarding the security proposals and the recent signage around Kingsley Avenue as residents believe that Kingsley Avenue, whilst being a private road, may have had public access. In order to determine whether these residents are correct with this assumption FPC need to formally ask CBC to investigate. As part of this process CBC need FPC to serve notice on landowners which will have to be sent by recorded delivery (these are a CBC form and is part of the application to CBC).

In answer to the resident's questions in item 122.1 Councillor Bidwell stated that FPC was duty bound to forward complaints to the relevant authority. CBC is responsible for the investigation and FPC will have no involvement apart from passing on the information received. The costs to FPC will be minimal administration costs.

The clerk to complete forms and send to landowners and CBC. **Action: KH**

Councillor Jones re-joined the meeting.

### 139 Urban Park

- 139.1 Councillor Dack reported that FPRA were applying for planning permission and would apply to FPC for a grant once quotes have been obtained.

### 140 Fairfield Park PTA 5K and Family Run

- 140.1 Following this year's success this is being planned for 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and will be scaled up slightly.

### 141 Parking and safety issues around the school

- 141.1 Councillor Hanks reported that CBC Highway Officer is happy to include FPC's proposals in the Highways program and will supply estimated dates shortly.

### 142 Mud on Eliot Way and Hitchin Road

- 142.1 CBC Planning Enforcement Officer has spoken to site manager at the Morgan Sindall site to discuss this problem. There is a jet wash on site & he stated that on occasions Crest Nicholson vehicles have turned up on the site & driven off when they discovered they were on the wrong site. This has probably contributed to the amount of mud on the road.
- 142.2 CBC Planning Enforcement Officer has e-mailed Crest Nicholson asking that they provide a road sweeper to clean the road down to the Dickens Boulevard roundabout to clear the residual mud.
- 142.3 FPC has asked CBC to clear the footpath from Eliot Way towards Stotfold as it is covered in stones and debris from vehicles which is a hazardous to people walking, cycling along the path. The surface is slippery in dry and worse in wet conditions; walkers and cyclist could easily fall into oncoming vehicles.
- 142.4 FPC has also reported that the gutters round the Eliot Way round about are now full of mud. Any heavy rain will flood into the roadway more due to the amount of mud in this location so any walkers could get soaked by the wake of vehicles driving round that way. The clerk to request CBC cleans the gullies. **Action: KH**

### 143 Planning Applications

#### 143.1 CB/TRE/17/00345 Land adjacent to and around Fairfield Hall

Works to tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order: Various works to trees surrounding and within Fairfield Hall as shown on the Tree Report. The trees are within the Order Ref: MB/TP0/99/00001

FPC had no objection to this application.

- 143.2 **CB/17/03058/FULL 151 Bronte Avenue**  
 Single storey side extension.  
 FPC has no objections to the basic principle of the application other than conditions are that the construction should be in matching materials and follow Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan. We do, however, have concerns it will effectively block some light to the adjoining property making a room darker by the close proximity of the new building wall and would appreciate CBC investigate this.
- 143.3 **CB/17/03695/ADV Former Pig Unit, Hitchin Road**  
 Erection of 10 no flags around temporary sales centre associated with approved residential development (CB/15/03182/FULL)  
 FPC had no objection to this application.
- 143.4 **CB/17/03495/FULL 165 Hitchin Road**  
 Erection of two, four bedroom semi-detached dwellings with associated access, parking on land formerly used as a builders yard.  
 It was agreed to delegate authority to the clerk to respond to CBC by 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 after consultation with Councillors Hanks, Jones and Milliken. **Action: KH/NH/SJ/TM**
- 143.5 **CB/17/04231/FULL 2 Burton Close**  
 Loft conversion to include rear dormer and insertion of three roof lights to existing roof.  
 It was agreed to delegate authority to the clerk to respond to CBC by 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 after consultation with Councillors Hanks, Jones and Milliken. **Action: KH/NH/SJ/TM**
- 143.6 **CB/17/04742/FULL 41 Palmerston Way**  
 Alterations to kitchen / breakfast room and conversion of double garage  
 It was agreed to delegate authority to the clerk to respond to CBC by 30<sup>th</sup> October 2017 after consultation with Councillors Hanks, Jones and Milliken. **Action: KH/NH/SJ/TM**

## 144 Planning Decisions

- 144.1 **CB/17/00358/RM Land East of Hitchin Road and south of the Former Pig Testing Unit.**  
 Reserved Matters: erection of 180 dwellings with landscaping, open space and associated works pursuant to outline planning permission CB/16/01455/OUT dated 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016.  
**Reserved Matters – Granted by CBC 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017**
- 144.2 **CB/17/02140/FULL Land adjacent to 161 Hitchin Road**  
 Residential development of four, three bedroom semi-detached dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping on land adjacent to 161 Hitchin Road.  
**CBC granted full planning permission 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017**
- 144.3 **CB/17/03058/FULL 151 Bronte Avenue**  
 Single storey side extension.  
**CBC granted full planning permission 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

## 145 Finance

- 145.1 Audit for 2016/17 accounts – The 2016/17 Annual Return for Fairfield Parish Council was approved at the Parish Council meeting held on 20th April 2017 following review and verification by an independent internal auditor. The external auditor, BDO LLP for external audit on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017 and concluded that in their view the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. They did raise an issue that FPC changed an answer in section 1 (annual governance statement) after the return was submitted and requested that FPC ensures they the annual governance statement is prepared correctly in the future. The closure of accounts notice has been displayed on the noticeboards and website.

145.2 Receipts

From whom	Description	Total
Central Bedfordshire Council	Precept	£44,702.00
Various	Apple Day - Donations	£360.27
Various	Apple Day - Sale of T-Shirts	£100.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£45,162.27</b>

It was

**RESOLVED**

**That receipts of £45,162.27 be noted.**

145.3 Payments

To whom	Description	Total
Katrina Henshaw	September wages	£291.80
HMRC	September Tax	£73.00
EE	Mobile phone	£46.09
EE	Mobile phone	£46.09
Cash Plus	Annual Fee	£69.00
Unity Trust	Bank charges	£21.15
BDO LLP	Audit 2016/17	£516.00
MBS	Maintenance contract - September	£914.55
RT Machinery	Aerator for bowl club	£2,850.00
Hertfordshire Timber & Building Supplies Limited	Bowls Club footpath	£1,083.48
Hertfordshire Timber & Building Supplies Limited	Bowls Club footpath	£587.88
Ryalls	Bowls Club footpath	£46.74
Ryalls	Bowls Club footpath	£46.74
Chris Brown	Designing business cards	£40.00
Howard Digital	Printing business cards	£14.16
Fairfield Community Hall	Youth Club September rent	£120.00
Fairfield Community Hall	Youth Club October rent	£150.00
SLCC	GDPR Training	£40.00
Catlin Insurance	Apple Day - Bouncy castle insurance	£64.89
Koncept Castles	Apple Day - Bouncy castle	£230.00
Penny Daffarn	Apple Day - Bouncy castle deposit	£20.00
	Apple Day - Catering items	£20.94
	Apple Day - Bottle Top Capper	£10.00
	Apple Day - Plastic Glasses: Gloves	£37.10
	Apple Day - Cider Yeast	£11.30
Letchworth Morris Men	Apple Day - Morris Dancers	£60.00
Nick Andrews	Apple Day - T-shirts	£276.00
Howard Digital	Apple Day - Posters	£12.00
Howard Digital	Apple Day - Picking Day posters and stickrts	£34.32
Sourceten	Apple Day - Printing A5 leaflets	£32.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£7,765.23</b>

It was

**RESOLVED**

**That payments of £7,765.23 be paid.**

145.4 Q2 summary and comparison with budget

	Budget 2016/17 bf	Budget 2017/18	Additional Income	Money Spend	Money Remaining
<b>Administration</b>	£ 3,897.89	£ 20,000.00	£ -	£ 13,942.48	£ 9,955.41
<b>Recreation &amp; Public Lands inc Artefacts</b>	£ 56,609.15	£ 17,904.00	£ -	£ 11,809.32	£ 62,703.83
<b>Orchards</b>	£ 11,591.30	£ 18,000.00	£ -	£ 285.00	£ 29,306.30
<b>Apple Day</b>	£ 350.04	£ 500.00	£ -	£ 64.89	£ 785.15
<b>PP / NHP</b>	£ 25,703.02	£ -	£ -	£ 50.00	£ 25,653.02
<b>Cemetery</b>	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 20,000.00
<b>Parking</b>	£ 49,902.50	£ 16,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 65,902.50
<b>Grants</b>	£ 15,850.63	£ 7,000.00	£ -	£ 4,628.78	£ 18,221.85
<b>Reserves</b>	£ 30,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 30,000.00
<b>Interest</b>	£ 855.75	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 855.75
<b>Vat</b>	<b>-£ 1,005.48</b>	<b>£ -</b>	<b>£ 1,005.48</b>	<b>£ 4,220.13</b>	<b>-£ 4,220.13</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 203,754.80</b>	<b>£ 89,404.00</b>	<b>£ 1,005.48</b>	<b>£ 35,000.60</b>	<b>£ 259,163.68</b>

145.5

**146 Correspondence**

146.1 **CBC – Government consultation - Housing numbers & Neighbourhood Plans. The link is <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-right-homes-in-the-right-places-consultation-proposals>.** The consultation documents outline a proposed standard method for calculating housing need for authorities and how neighbourhood planning groups could have greater certainty on the level of housing required in their plans. The 'Housing need consultation data table' suggests the proposed level of housing required by Authority area (found on the second 'tab' Publication Data').

**147 Any other business**

NB This is for an exchange of information only. No decisions or actions can be agreed at this time.

147.1 Most of the solar lights on the footpath behind the Community Hall are not working and may need either cleaning or maintenance from the supplier.

**148 Date of next meeting**

148.1.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at 7.30 pm

Meeting closed at 9.25 pm