

Minutes of an ordinary Meeting of Fairfield Parish Council held virtually on Zoom on Thursday 11th February 2021 at 7:00 pm

Councillors present: N Andrews (NA) (Chair), BE Dack (BD), P Daffarn (PD), A M Hunt (AMH), S Reader (SR) and N Reynolds (NR)

Officer present: Katrina Henshaw (KH)

Also present for all or part of the meeting: Ward Member Councillor S Dixon (SD) and six members of the public.

280 Apologies for Absence

280.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor V Khatwa (VH) (family commitments) and Ward Members Councillors B Saunders (BS) and N Harris (NH).

281 Chair's Notice

- 281.1 FPC's statement on commitment to openness and transparency is available on FPC website.
- 281.2 The Chair reminded everyone that under FPC's policy of transparency and openness, permission needs to be requested if anyone wants to record part of whole of the meeting. FPC's current Zoom settings do not allow recording without the Chair's permission.

282 Disclosures of Interest and Dispensation requests

- 282.1 Councillors Andrews and Dack declared an interest in items 285.4 and 296.1 (Councillor Andrews is a Trustee/Chair of the Community Hall Trust and Councillor Dack is a Trustee/Treasurer). It was agreed they would both stay at the Zoom meeting but would not participate in the decision for item 285.4.
- 282.2 No written requests for dispensations for declarable interests.
- 282.3 No requests for dispensation were granted.

283 Council Minutes

283.1 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 14th January 2021 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 Chair.

284 Public Participation Session

284.1 One member of the public requested to speak on item 285.1. The member of public explained his concerns over the planning application as he considered it was an over development and this would have a major impact on his privacy. He also felt it was not in keeping with the area.

FPC explained that CBC is the planning authority and FPC is a Statutory Consultee. FPC reassured the resident that it does have a keen interest in planning applications as it does wish to protect the design of the village which is why it has recently gone through a lengthy process to remove PDR in Fairfield by getting Article 4 exemption. FPC also encouraged the resident to send his objections to CBC.

285 Planning Applications

285.1 **CB/21/00193/FULL 155 Bronte Avenue.**

Re-submission of CB/20/04235/FULL First and second floor rear extension.

Before FPC's comments were agreed comments received from a resident regarding this application were noted.

FPC OBJECT to this application and if officers are minded recommending it for approval FPC request it is called into the Development Management Committee for determination.

Reason: Overdevelopment of the site and concerns that the increase mass will have an impact of the privacy of the neighbours.

285.2 **CB/20/04267/LB Apartment 50 Bedford Wing, Fairfield Hall.**

Listed building: Install secondary glazing to four sash windows.

FPC had no objections.

285.3 **CB/21/00216/FULL 12 Salisbury Close.**

Incorporate existing veranda area into kitchen.

FPC had no objections to the basic principle of the application based on the information available and providing there are conditions that the construction complies with the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan Design Statement.

Before this item was discussed Councillor Dack explained that during the discussions for transferring the Community Hall to FPC it was noticed that the wording in the section 106 agreement stated that 'A Hall which may be used as a sports hall and/or for religious ceremonies...' This wording is incorrect as the use of a Community Hall is much wider. It had therefore been agreed that Linden Homes would get the section 106 agreement amended to legally extend the use of the building for wider use, hence the planning application in item 285.4. The 106 agreement forms one of the covenants to the transfer document, so it is important that the transfer document contains the correct information.

Councillors Andrews and Dack took no part in the discussion of this application.

285.4 **CB/21/00365/SECM Fairfield Community Hall, Kipling Crescent.**

Modification of Section 106 Agreement attached to planning permission CB/00/01151/OUT to request a variation in the section 106 agreement to legally extend the use of the building for wider use.

FPC had no objections.

286 Planning Decisions

286.1 **CB/20/04235/FULL 155 Bronte Avenue.**

First and second floor rear extension.

FPC had no objections to the basic principle of the application based on the information available and providing there are conditions that the construction complies with the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan Design Statement.

Application withdrawn 11th January 2021.

286.2 **CB/20/04459/FULL 12 Dickens Boulevard.**

Proposed first floor rear extension.

FPC had no objections to the basic principle of the application based on the information available and providing there are conditions that the construction complies with the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan Design Statement.

Full permission granted by CBC on 25th January 2021.

286.3 **CB/TRE/20/00683 Fairfield.**

Works to trees protected by a Preservation Order MB/99/00001: Various works including removing, reducing and removing deadwood of various trees.

FPC had no comments on this and will leave it to the CBC Tree Officer to carry out appropriate investigations.

CBC granted consent pm 14th January 2021.

287 Public Inquiry

287.1 CB/18/01615/OUT Land Adjacent to Wilbury Hills Cemetery, Letchworth

Erection of crematorium, including vehicular access to Arleseey New Road, internal access roads, car parking and service areas, alterations to levels, landscaping and memorial gardens and related works.

Public inquiry to be held as a virtual event opening on Monday 22nd February 2021 at 10.00 am – currently scheduled for 4 sitting days.

288 Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Members Report

288.1 Councillor Dixon was pleased to report that the number of Covid-19 cases in the Stotfold and Langford Ward (which includes Fairfield) has dramatically decreased and there are no patterns of concern. However, it was still crucial that everyone continues to wash hands, cover face and make space (“Hands, Space, Face”).

Vaccinations Centres have been set up at Shefford Health Centre and Priory House. Councillor Dixon acknowledged that neither of these centres are easily accessible by public transport and asked residents to contact him if anyone was struggling to get to one of these centres.

CBC will be commencing the 2021 Census next month and residents will be encouraged to respond online as this was more environmentally friendly and more Covid-19 compliant. However, there would be alternatives options for people without access to the internet. There is no direct action for FPC but it will be useful if FPC can encourage residents to complete it.

Richard Wenham has been elected as new Leader of CBC.

288.2 Sharing mobile CCTV with other Parish Councils – Councillor Dixon is arranging for a CBC Officer to do a presentation on CCTV to interested Parish Councils. FPC has already expressed an interest in sharing a mobile CCTV with other Parish Councils.

288.3 FPC thanked CBC for clearing West Drive.

289 Local Plan

Following the further Local Plan hearing sessions held in December 2020, CBC has now received a letter from the Inspectors’ outlining their views on a number of key issues and providing a direction on the way forward for the examination. This letter is available on CBC’s Website.

The Inspectors have agreed with CBC on many of the points discussed at the recent hearing sessions. This is positive news for CBC and marks an important step in terms of getting this much-needed Local Plan adopted.

Regarding East of Arleseey, The Inspectors are now satisfied the submitted site boundary is appropriate and agree with CBC’s proposed modifications to confirm no development must take place beyond the gas pipeline. They asked for a revised map and details of the uses of the area between the Blue Lagoon and West Drive.

In terms of Holme Farm and Marston Gate, the Inspectors’ feel that further mitigation is required to resolve their concerns. As such, they have requested further modifications to be prepared for these sites. Officers will start work on these further modifications immediately and hope to be able to respond to the Inspectors within the next few weeks.

The next step will be for the Inspectors and CBC to agree a final schedule of proposed Modifications and to carry out the statutory 6-week consultation.

Although this is all excellent news for Fairfield, FPC does need to ensure that the red line is drawn as a straight line and it was agreed that FPC should be consulted about the amendments. The Clerk to request a meeting with Caroline Danby, CBC to discuss these points. FPC to invite Silke Gruner, CSA Environmental to the meeting. **Action: KH**

290 Additional Storage for Cricket Club

290.1 FPC has received a proposal for a new shed to be installed in the Cricket Club Compound and quotations from B2B, Maydencroft and Secure Way to install it. Permission has been received from FHMC and The Cricket Club.

Following a discussion, and with a unanimous vote, it was

RESOLVED

That FPC would purchase the new proposed shed from Asgard in the colour green at a cost of £2,128 and award the contract for installing the shed to Maydencroft.

REASONS

To provide new storage for the Cricket Club and the quotation from Maydencroft was considered best value.

The clerk to purchase the shed and place the contract. **Action: KH**

291 Removal of Green Storage Building

291.1 FPC received a report from residents and quotations from B2B, Maydencroft and Oracle to remove the shed. It was also noted that the CBC Environmental Health Officer had expressed concerns over the asbestos on the roof of the shed.

Following a discussion, and with a unanimous vote, it was

RESOLVED

That FPC would arrange to have the shed removed, subject to planning permission and after the above shed has been installed. It was agreed to award the contract for the removal and disposal of the shed to Maydencroft.

REASONS

To make the area safe and more attractive. The quotation from Maydencroft was considered best value.

The clerk to apply for planning permission, if required, and place the contract with Maydencroft, subject to planning permission. Maydencroft to supply FPC with appropriate certificates for the removal and disposal of the Asbestos. Maydencroft also to supply a method statement which FPC will get checked by an appropriate expert before work is commenced. **Action: KH**

292 New 'inclusive' play equipment

292.1 FPRA has advised that the provider for the equipment has been selected and they will be holding a public consultation shortly on Zoom. It is hoped the new equipment will be installed in March 2021.

It was noted that it had been agreed at the FPC meeting held on 12th September 2019 (item 170) that FPC should be providing inclusive play equipment in all play areas around Fairfield to ensure it was available to everyone and that FPC would be prepared to provide £12,500 funding for this. (CBC will be paying £25,000 and FPRC will be paying £12,500).

Following a discussion, and with a unanimous vote, it was

RESOLVED

That FPC would split the £7,000 donation from Anglian Water equally for this project and the new benches around the Cricket Ground.

293 St Luke's Chapel

293.1 There are a number of windows that are currently unprotected and are showing signs of damage, possibly from stones being thrown through them. One window in particular has all four panels in the window showing signs of considerable damage. There have also been reports of voices being heard in the underground vault to the church. The door to the vault is to the South West corner of the building. Councillor Dixon has asked CBC Officers to look into this.

Councillor Dack to ask Belvoir for an update on the current status of the sale of this property.

Action: BD

294 Extending the remote meeting regulations

294.1 The government is not currently planning to extend the remote meeting regulations beyond 7th May 2021. Along with other local government bodies, NALC is continuing to press for this extension. BATPC is also preparing guidance for local councils on preparing for and managing the return to physical meetings in May and beyond.

BATPC has already written to the six MPs serving Bedfordshire to ask for their support in extending the remote meetings regulations. It is not known as yet how things will be from 7th May 2021 onwards. In-person meetings may be possible. However, should lockdown still apply in some form, it will be exceedingly difficult for Councils to transact all necessary business, some of which cannot be delegated to officers, if they could not meet.

Following a discussion, and with a unanimous vote, it was

RESOLVED

That FPC would lobby Richard Fuller, MP for North East Bedfordshire on this matter as this would add further weight to the argument.

The Clerk to write to Richard Fuller, MP for North East Bedfordshire. **Action: KH**

It was also agreed to hold the Annual Meeting on Thursday 6th May if required.

295 Annual Parish Meeting

295.1 It was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting virtually on Thursday 15th April.

296 Transfer of the Community Hall

296.1 Councillor Reader advised that they are currently working on the list of future responsibilities for FPC and the Trustees.

297 Trees on Bronte Avenue

297.1 These trees have become quite large over recent years and frequently lorries and large vehicles are hitting the branches of these trees, and breaking them, or causing parts to fly off. In summertime when the leaves are on the trees, visibility is also becoming an issue. There is concern that this could be a safety issue, if cars or larger vehicles on the road cannot see pedestrians or cars coming out of driveways. The branches are overhanging the footpath and are at the point of overhanging front gardens on some properties. The trees are also blocking light out of the houses as they are growing so large and close together.

Hislop & Co Horticulture have looked at the trees and agreed there is a problem. Unfortunately, they do not believe the problem will be easy to fix and they think the trees are too big for the road and will look odd if they are cut back. They no longer have a tree division and outsource tree work.

FPC has asked CBC to look at these trees and make suggestions to solve this ongoing problem as CBC is responsible for them.

It was agreed that FPC would ask other arborists for suggested solutions to this problem. FPC to also ask CBC and the other arborists to offer a long-term plan for the maintenance of these trees and the trees on Dickens Boulevard. **Action: KH**

298 Orchards

298.1 FPC has received permission from FHMC to do the suggested work by Bob Lever and are waiting for Colin Carpenter to advise what work he can do within the current Covid-19 restrictions.

Councillor Daffarn advised that the volunteer work had been completed in West Orchard and the volunteer work in East Orchard will be completed as soon as it can practically be done.

299 Proposed Garden of Reflection

299.1 Councillor Dixon advised that no contaminating materials were found on the land. There are a few issues around the 'flora and fauna' that are being considered by CBC Officers. Once the Officers have submitted the final report, Councillor Dixon will arrange a meeting between FPC and CBC Assets to discuss the future of the land.

300 Allotments

300.1 Councillor Reader advised Councillor Dixon had engaged in conversations with CBC Assets on the piece of land that has been identified. Councillor Dixon is also investigating if planning permission would be required for the change of use of this land.

301 Grant to Pandas Support Group

302 There is still £693.00 grant remaining for hiring the Community Hall for six hours a month for one year. As they were unable to hire the hall during 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic this month will be carried over for them to use when they are able to.

303 Neighbourhood Watch

303.1 Councillors Dack, Hunt and Reynolds met with the NHW Volunteers on Monday 8th February. Sadly, the number of volunteers for both NHW and for the proposed Streetwatch had decreased since the short-lived crimewave subsided. Setting up a Streetwatch was no longer viable. The NHW Volunteers have decided to delay the delivering of NHW leaflets and installation of NHW signs until the current Covid-19 lockdown is finished.

FPC has been speaking to CBC Safety Watch regarding the on-going anti-social behaviour in the overflow car park for Bannatynes. They have visited the area and agreed to add it to the areas they patrol.

304 Crime figures

304.1 During January there were four reported crime in Fairfield. These were for: -

- Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety.
- Sec 4 POA Fear or provocation of violence.
- Assault without Injury - Common assault and battery.
- Criminal Damage to a Dwelling.

305 Speed Watch Figures

305.1 There was only one Speed Watch during January 2021 due to the weather. During this session nineteen vehicles were recorded travelling over the speed limit. There was another speed session last week with fourteen vehicles being recorded as travelling over the speed limit. These figures showing that speeding is still an issue on the Hitchin Road.

306 Finance

306.1 Bank reconciliation to 31st January 2021

Where the money is	Value
Unity Trust	£202,913.94
Cash Plus Card	£200.58
Petty Cash	£0.00
Total Money	£203,114.52 (1)
Cash Book	
Total Receipts	£112,080.16
PLUS balance carried over 1 st April 2020	£179,347.06
LESS Total Payments	£88,312.70
Total Money in cash book	£203,114.52 (2)

As (1) and (2) are equal there are no issues to report.

306.2 Receipts

From whom	Description	Total
Design Wall	Website	£35.37
Total		£35.37

Payments

To whom	Description	Total
Katrina Henshaw	January wages	£683.17
HMRC	January Tax and NI	£234.05
Asentric	Clerk's Pension	£150.00
EE	Mobile phone – January	£10.46
Mail Chimp	Monthly subscription	£23.50
Acronis	1 year subscription for back up	£69.99
Jamie's Shoes	Key cutting	£6.95
Ebuyer	Toner	£100.98
Hislop & Co Horticulture	Maintenance contract – January	£1,200.00
	Gritting	£2,241.00
	Gritting	£1,232.10
	Gritting	£348.30
Todd's Nursery	Silver birch trees	£193.20
CSA Environmental	Participation Public Examination on 10 th December 2020.	£145.80
Blandy and Blandy	Legal advice re Community Hall transfer	£4,516.00
Total		£11,155.50

It was

RESOLVED

That payments of £11,155.50 be paid and receipts of £35.37 was noted.

307 Correspondence

- 307.1 CBC – Start of Honours Process for New Year 2022.
- 307.2 CBC – Fly tipping. Councillor Khatwa has added this to the Family Forum Facebook Page as requested.
- 307.3 CBC – Safer Central Strategy 2021-2024 has been agreed and is on the Safer Centrals website - <https://safercentral.org/strategy/>.
- 307.4 CBC - Schools for the Future consultation about SEND provision. The consultation runs for 13 weeks and ends on 5th May 2021. Full details are on <https://www.schoolsforthefuture.co.uk/send>.
- 307.5 HM Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire – Following the very sad passing of Captain Sir Tom Moore, a virtual book of condolence has been set up at www.sirtom.org and is specifically for Bedfordshire residents to leave a message and pay their respects.
- On Sunday 7th February at 10:00am, there was a virtual service at St Mary's Church in Marston Moreteyne will be holding a virtual service. People were invited to join the YouTube service with the Bishop of Bedford, during which there was be prayers for Captain Sir Tom and all those whom have been lost.
- 307.6 There was no urgent correspondence.

308 Any other business

- NB This is for exchange of information only. No discussions can take place, nor can any decisions or actions be agreed at this time.
- 308.1 There was no other business.

309 Date of next meeting

- 309.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on 11th March 2021 at 7.00 pm.

Meeting closed 8.55 pm.

Glossary of acronyms

BATPC	Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils
CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CCTV	Closed-circuit television
Covid-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
FHMC	Fairfield Hall Management Company
FPC	Fairfield Parish Council
FPRA	Fairfield Park Resident Association
FPRC	Fairfield Park Resident Company
NALC	National Association of Local Councils
NB	Nota bene (Latin phrase meaning 'note well')
NHW	Neighbourhood Watch
PDR	Permitted Development Rights
SEND	Special education needs and disabilities