

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Fairfield Parish Council held in Fairfield Community Hall on Thursday 9th December 2021 at 7:00 pm

Councillors present: N Andrews (NA) (Chair), BE Dack (BD), P Daffarn (PD), A Hopkins (AH), A Papakosta (AP), 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 five members of the public.

203 Apologies for Absence

203.1 Apologies for absence were received from Ward Members Councillors N Harris (NH) and B Saunders (BS).

204 Chair's Notice

204.1 FPC's statement on commitment to openness and transparency was presented with the meeting sign-in sheets and is available on FPC website. The members of public present confirmed they had read the statement.

204.2 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.

205 Disclosures of Interest and Dispensation requests

205.1 Councillors Andrews and Dack declared an interest in item 214 (Councillor Andrews is a Trustee/Chair of the Fairfield Community Trust and Councillor Dack is a Trustee/Treasurer). It was agreed that they could both stay at the meeting for both items but would not take part in the vote for item 214.1.

205.2 Councillor Dack and Reynolds declared an interest in item 218.2 (Councillor Dack is a FPRA Committee Member and Councillor Reynolds is the FPRA Committee Chair). It was agreed that they could all stay at the meeting as it was an update only.

205.3 No written requests for dispensations for declarable interests.

205.4 No requests for dispensation were granted.

206 Council Minutes

206.1 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 11th November 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.

207 Public Participation Session

207.1 One resident congratulated FPC on the Christmas Tree and Lights in Urban Park. He also asked for the solar lights across the cricket field to be repaired and asked the Councillor Dixon to keep fighting for the 30mph speed limit along Hitchin Road between the A507 roundabout and Harlington House.

208 Co-Option to fill two casual vacancies on Fairfield Parish Council

208.1 Applications from Anthony Hopkins, Neil Jones and Anna Papakosta. Each candidate was invited to make a brief verbal presentation to members, outlining their relevant skills and experience. Each candidate in turn (alphabetically, by surname) then spoke for a maximum of three minutes. After each of the presentations, members asked the candidates questions.

208.2 Nominations were received for Anthony Hopkins and Anna Papakosta to fill the first vacancy and a vote as outlined in the Co-Option Policy and Procedure was carried out. With four votes and an overall majority, it was

RESOLVED

That Anna Papakosta be Co-Opted as a Parish Councillor for Fairfield Parish Council.

208.3 Nominations were received for Anthony Hopkins to fill the second vacancy and a vote as outlined in the Co-Option Policy and Procedure was carried out. With four votes and an overall majority, it was

RESOLVED

That Anthony Hopkins be Co-Opted as a Parish Councillor for Fairfield Parish Council.

208.4 AH and AP signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in front of the Proper Officer and then they took up their seats on Fairfield Parish Council. The clerk to arrange his induction training.
Action: KH

208.5 AH and AP to complete the online Register of Members' Interest Forms. **Action: AH / AP**

209 Planning Applications

209.1 **CB/TRE/21/00592 East & West Orchards.**

Works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order CB/10/00010/G1 & G2: maintenance of various trees to include pruning, thinning and removing dead wood.

FPC has no comments on this as FPC is the applicant and will leave it to the CBC Tree Officer to carry out appropriate investigations.

209.2 **CB/21/05235/FULL 6 Shaftesbury Drive.**

Extension to existing Annex

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

209.3 **CB/CB/21/05264/FULL 29 Fleming Drive. (Deadline for comments – 5th January 2022)**

Single storey rear extension, conversion of existing garage, modification of existing garden wall & installation of air conditioning unit.

As this application was only received on the day of this meeting and some initial concerns had been raised it was agreed to ask Councillor Dixon, as a precaution due to the deadline for comments, to request it is called into the Development Management Committee for determination. FPC to also request an extension for comments so the application can be discussed at the next FPC meeting. **Action: KH**

209.4 There were no other urgent planning applications.

210 Planning Decisions

210.1 **CB/TRE/21/00493 Parklands surrounding Fairfield Hall.**

Works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order. MB/TPO,99/00001 various trees as shown on the works schedule.

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

Preserved Tree - Grant Consented by CBC 2nd November 2021

210.2 **CB/21/03812/FULL1 Helena Crescent**

Single storey side extension and insertion of first floor window to en-suite.

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 18th November 2021.

210.3 **CB/21/04523/FULL 6 Shaftesbury Drive**

Extension to existing annexe.

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.

Application withdrawn 24th November 2021.

211 Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Members Report

211.1 Councillor Dixon reported the following:-

Covid-19 – The new variant, Omicron, appears milder but is spreading more quickly so more people are being hospitalised and intense care units are filling up. It is therefore crucial that people get vaccinated and have boosters when they can. The Vaccination Centre at CBC Offices is increasing the number of vaccinations they can give and are looking for extra volunteers.

Fairness Group – A Working Group has been launched to give everyone a chance post the pandemic as it is expected there will be lots of changes needed to be made.

Hybrid meetings for local authorities – Lawyers for Local Government are asking the Government to allow Hybrid meetings for local authorities.

Electric Car Charging Points – CBC has completed its tender process for a supplier to install charging points across the authority. This should be ratified by Christmas.

Hitchin Road Speed Limit – Ahead of the Abbey Mill development completion, CBC Highways have agreed to meet to discuss introducing a 30mph limit between A507 roundabout and the Eliot Way roundabout and other aesthetic elements. Councillors Dack and Hopkins offered to attend this meeting. **Action: SD / BD / AH**

Parking at Fairfield Lower School, Ruskins Drive – CBC has been approached regards keeping the temporary access to the school until the new on street parking has been completed as sharing access with the construction vehicles may not be practical.

Libraries – Residents are encouraged to engage in the recently launched consultation on moving the library from the Simpson Centre to the Green Acres Centre.

Gritting – CBC will be gritting roads as it has done in previous years. CBC is currently renewing the agreement for FPC to continue to grit adopted roads. It was agreed that FPC will pay for Hislops & Co Horticulture to be on stand-by for gritting over Christmas at the rates on the maintenance contract (agreed item 70.1 22nd July 2021). Councillors Andrews and Dack to authorise gritting when it's required. **Action: NA / BD**

Christmas Tree – Congratulations to FPC for the new tree and lights in Urban Park which have drawn extremely positive comments.

Christmas Tree Collections – CBC will be collecting trees in January as it has done in previous years. It was agreed that FPC will be arranging a Christmas Tree Collection Point again. Councillor Dack to liaise with Hislop & Co Horticulture for disposal of trees and for the signs to be displayed. **Action: BD**

Bid Tree Planting – There has been an enormous uptake for this scheme. There are some 12,000 trees agreed for planting in the balance of this season and in connection with the Queens Green Canopy Appeal.

Ward Councillors – Councillor Harris has left the Conservative Party but remains as a Ward Councillor with the same contact details. Councillors Dixon and Saunders remain as Ward Councillors and are still part of the Conservative Party.

211.2 In her absence, Councillor Harris send the following report:-

Highways issues

- Edge of Emily Place & Bronte with the cobbles – Officers have confirmed a work order has been raised. Ringway have confirmed they have a back log of repairs and maintenance.
- Ongoing repairs – She has also raised concerns with CBC about the repair work carried out by Ringway on the park including patchwork repairs on A507 roundabout, Hitchin Road, Stotfold. Repair Work is guaranteed for one year and tax payers should not be fronting the cost of duplicate repairs when the quality is an issue. She has asked Officers to be pushing back to Ringway on issues not resolved due to quality issues.
- Bronte Avenue Trees – CBC will have these trees pruned this winter (Mid-January latest). The shape of the tree means they are tricky to prune heavily so the work will be to strategically remove the branches which are causing issues (too low, too close to street lights). Once the work is complete, CBC will reassess to determine whether further works are required.

Bridleway – Following a site visit after last month's parish council's meeting where a resident raised concerns, she has raised concerns to CBC officers. She given some feedback to Councillor Andrews and hoping this issue can be resolved with a compromise.

Tesco Car Park – Councillor Harris and CBC officers are liaising with Tesco regarding poor quality repairs to the outside area. More repairs are needed on the road/parking spaces, and she has also asked if there can be a different approach for the bollards as these are constantly needing repairs. They would need to be in keeping with the area, so she has asked Tesco to liaise with FPC.

Faulty Lights – Councillor Harris has spoken with Scanlans about this work and has been advised that work orders were chased several times in November.

Canopy on Tesco side of play area – Scanlans advised FPRA wished to move the canopy but there were queries regarding planning permission. Councillor Harris has offered help to liaise with Planning Officers if required.

Neighbourhood Watch – Councillor Harris has asked that any Fairfield resident that is not registered on the Facebook group (Fairfield Neighbourhood Watch) (SG5) to please join and be kept updated on any local concerns. She asked everyone to be even more vigilant with the lead up to the Christmas period.

Covid-19 – With cases of COVID-19 still at very high levels people are asked to remember the simple actions they can take to reduce the risk of catching COVID-19:

- Make sure you open your windows for a few minutes at a time if you have guests
- Wear a face covering
- Continue to take regular rapid lateral flow tests to help give you peace of mind that you're not spreading the virus
- Get a PCR test if you have any symptoms
- Above all get vaccinated and get your COVID-19 vaccination booster if you're eligible.

211.3 Preserving the Street Scene – Councillor Dixon to arrange a meeting between CBC and Councillors Dack, Reader and Reynolds to discuss ways how FPC can improve the integration of the Fairfield Plan Design Statement with planning applications so as to protect the aesthetics of the street scene. **Action: SD**

Councillor Harris has just raised some comments and concerns about Fairfield and surrounding areas updating their design guides. Officers will be liaising with parishes/town councils shortly on the process.

211.4 CCTV – Councillor Dixon will arrange a meeting via Teams or Zoom with Fairfield, Henlow, Clifton and Langford to discuss sharing mobile CCTV. **Action: SD**

212 Central Bedfordshire Council Repairs to Highways

212.1 Councillor Reynolds advised that the repairs had done been done as agreed with CBC. It was agreed that FPC will write to CBC highways to state its displeasure on the state of repairs and ask when the work will be done. **Action: KH**

213 Governor at Etonbury Academy

213.1 It was agreed to discuss if FPC will nominate a Councillor to represent the community on their Local Governing Body at the January meeting.

214 Community Hall

214.1 It was agreed with a unanimous vote (excluding Councillors Andrews and Dack) that FPC will gift the Apple iMac to Fairfield Community Trust and therefore has no responsibility for this equipment. A Deed of Gift was signed by two Councillors and Witnessed by the Proper Officer. The clerk to send to the Community Hall Trust. **Action: KH**

214.2 The missing S106 side letter has been supplied and the contents will not affect the transfer. FPC to discuss taking ownership of the Community Hall at the January meeting.

215 Trim Trail

215.1 It was agreed to proceed with looking into this project with Councillor Reader as the Lead Councillor and Councillors Dack, Hopkins and Reynolds as part of the Working Party. **Action: SR / BD / AH/ NR**

216 Tree Survey

216.1 The tree survey from RGS was received and this has also been sent to FHMC as trees 226 and 227 are their responsibility. The clerk to request quotations from Apex, Blue Tree and Colin Carpenter for the works. **Action: KH**

It was agreed that Councillor Reynolds would try and coordinate the next tree survey for all groups in Fairfield. **Action: NR**

217 Orchards

217.1 FHMC has granted permission for FPC to do this work detailed in Bob Lever's report. FPC is waiting for planning permission from CBC on the trees with TPOs.

FPC received quotations from Colin Carpenter for the arborist work on Bob Lever's report. Following a discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That FPC will award the contract to Colin Carpenter at a cost of £2,500, subject to permission from CBC.

REASONS

- **FPC consider the price to be best value.**
- **To benefit from his experience as Colin Carpenter is already familiar with the Orchards.**

The clerk to place the contract and request the work is completed before 31st January 2022. **Action: KH**

218 Defibrillators

218.1 FPC is waiting for permission from Crest Nicholson (via Preim) to install the Defibrillator on the back of the bin store at Harlington House.

A quotation was received from Primary Care Trust for a Defibrillator and following a discussion with a unanimous vote, it was

RESOLVED

To purchase this defibrillator at a cost of £1,315 if permission is received.

REASON

FPC considered the price was a fair price.

The clerk to place the contact. **Action: KH**

A quotation and Method Statement from Switched-On to install it and following a decision and with a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

To award the contract to Switched-On to install the defibrillator at a cost of £375 if permission is received.

REASON

FPC considered the price was a fair price and Switched-On were reliable contractors.

The clerk to place the contact. **Action: KH**

218.2 FPC has also asked FHMC and FPRA if they have any suggested locations for a Defibrillator.

219 Bannatynes Overspill car park

219.1 Councillor Andrews is arranging a meeting with FHMC. **Action: NA**

220 Fairfield Sign

220.1 Councillors Dack and Reader are forming a Working Group. They have a volunteer from Fairfield Gardens and are waiting for a volunteer from FHMC. **Action: BD / SR**

221 Proposed Garden of Reflection

221.1 FPC is waiting for Vistry to advise if the pre-planning advice is sufficient information for Fairfield Redevelopments Ltd to agree to release the restrictive covenant on the land that states the land in question cannot be used for anything except 'employment use.' The clerk to continue to chase up. **Action: KH**

222 Meeting with Bowls Club

222.1 Councillors Andrews and Daffarn met with the Bowls Club to discuss their car park (which is shared with the Cricket Club) and upgrading the pathway between this car park and either the bowls club or at least to the path on Palmerston Way to make a surface so there is accessibility for wheelchairs from the car park to the Bowls Club.

They discussed expanding the car park to the tree line to the East and doing some work to level the current space and upgrading a pathway to give access to Bowls Club.

The Bowls Club was advised they would need to contact Hotbed (via the Directors of FHMC) for permission for the work.

The Cricket Club Chair has been consulted and was happy with the plan.

It was agreed for Councillors Andrews and Daffarn to continue discussions with the Bowls Club on this matter. **Action: NA / PD**

223 Meeting with Cricket Club 30th November 2021

223.1 Councillors Andrews and Reader met with Letchworth Cricket Club to discuss their plans for next season in Fairfield. The Cricket Club indicated they may need some funding from FPC. It was agreed for Councillors Andrews and Reader to continue discussions with the Cricket Club on this matter. **Action: NA / SR**

224 Meeting with Resident/Management Companies/Associations and Steering Committee

224.1 The meeting is to be arranged for February / March 2022. **Action: KH**

225 Crime Figures

225.1 During November there were 3 crimes in Fairfield. These were

- 2 residential burglaries
- 1 other theft

226 Speed Watch Figures

226.1 During November there were no sessions in Fairfield. Throughout Bedfordshire there were 140 sessions with 497 letters being issued. 64 of the sessions were from Speed Watch Groups and 76 were from Bedfordshire Borough Speed Awareness Vehicle.

227 Remembrance Sunday – 14th November 2021 2.30 pm Urban Park

227.1 Councillor Dack reported that the first outdoor Remembrance Sunday was well attended, and he has thanked all those who took part. It was good to see such a wide age range of people taking part and attending in an inclusive service.

The poppies proved welcome and certainly make an attractive addition to the wreaths for those who wish to continue to remember. The addition of the cornet player added greatly to the service and Ruth is happy to perform again next year providing we keep to an afternoon service as she performs in Welwyn Garden City in the morning. There was a little teething problem with the outdoor sound system which will be ironed out with experience.

Residents donated £280.71 and the Community Church donated £50. Following a discussion, it was agreed that FPC will make an additional donation of £69.29. The clerk to arrange to pay the Royal British Legion £400. **Action: KH**

Thanks were expressed to Councillor Dack for organising this event.

228 Switching on the 2021 Christmas Lights – 28th November 2021 5.00 pm Urban Park

228.1 Councillor Andrews reported that the Christmas Tree Light Up was a successful event, with over 200 residents in attendance. Both the Bowls Club and WI were able to boost their funds through this event.

It was felt the event should be kept to a small affair for future years with a couple of entertainers and refreshments from Community Groups, expanding to the Community Church and/or Fairfield Scouts if they wished to get involved. It is planned to do the event again in 2022, as it was another way for the Community to come together.

Thanks were made to all the volunteers who helped arrange this event, especially Robin Horsley and Jessie Sahota. Thanks were also expressed to Councillor Andrews for organising this event.

229 Christmas Carol Service

229.1 Carol Singing around the tree in the Urban Park will be on Saturday 11th December. The singing will start at 4.30 pm and at the end, the Bowls Club and the WI will be offering mulled wine, hot chocolate, orange juice and minced pies. The Risk Assessment has been completed and the Insurance Company has confirmed FPC's insurance covers this event.

230 Imajica Theatre Company Interactive Show – 20th December Community Hall

230.1 This is the first Interactive Show held in Fairfield and is sponsored jointly by the Parish Council and the Community Hall Trust. Both performances have been sold out.

231 Finance

231.1 Bank reconciliation to 30th November 2021

Where the money is	Value
Unity Trust	£54,678.65
Plus receipts not banked	£280.71
Cash Plus Card	£602.98
Petty Cash	£0.00
The Cambridge Building Society	£85,000.00
United Trust Bank	£85,000.00
Total Money	£225,562.34 (1)
Cash Book	
Total Receipts	£154,149.43
PLUS balance carried over 1 st April 2021	£195,309.28
LESS Total Payments	£123,896.37
Total Money in cash book	£225,562.34 (2)

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

231.2 Receipts

From whom	Description	Total
Residents	Donations for Royal British Legion	£280.71
Fairfield Community Church	Donation for Royal British Legion	£50.00
Total		£330.71

Payments

To whom	Description	Total
Katrina Henshaw	November wages	£810.08
HMRC	November Tax	£315.06
Asentric	Clerk's Pension – November	£150.00
EE	Mobile phone – November	£12.00
Mail Chimp	Monthly subscription	£23.66
ACM Business Services	Internal Audit 2020/2021	£160.00
Hislops & Co Horticulture	September Monthly Maintenance	£1,200.00
	October Monthly Maintenance	£1,200.00
	Brown Grit	£4,317.60
RGS	Tree Survey	£540.00
Fairfield Community Hall	Scout Rent – November	£865.00
Ebuyer	Apple iMac for Community Hall	£939.48
Printed Easy	Order of Service	£66.00
The Flag Shop	3 Flags	£20.85
J&M Electrical Supplies	Cable	£19.99
	Cable	£19.99
Gear4Music	Microphone Stand	£37.49
	Microphone Clip	£8.79
Viking	Storage box	£27.47

Switched on	Installation of a 32-amp and a 16-amp CeeForm single phase socket on the back of the power cabinet in Urban Park	£372.00
The National Allotment Society	Annual Membership	£66.00
Total		£11,171.46

It was

RESOLVED

That payments of £11,171.46 be paid and receipts of £330.71 was noted. It was also noted that £1,500 transferred to cash plus on 16th November

231.3 It was agreed to move £2,500 from the Recreation Budget to the Community Hall Budget for 2021/22.

231.4 Following a discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That FPC will set a Precept of £110,311 (£81.35 for Council Tax Band D – 2% change) for 2022/2023. The Budget and Precept were set as follows. (NB some of these projects may not be started or completed during 2022/23 so unspent monies will be carried over to the following financial year).

Description	Allocated in current funds	Estimated Costs	Budget 2022/23
Administration			
General		£25,000.00	£25,000.00
Equipment for Hybrid meetings		£3,000.00	£3,000.00
Legal expenses for Community Hall		£3,000.00	£3,000.00
Recreation & Public Lands			
Money from Youth Club (1/2/19)	£1,674.32		£0.00
Green Space / Equipment		£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Grass verges / roundabouts / dog bins		£12,000.00	£12,000.00
Gritting		£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Road crossing officer		£4,000.00	£4,000.00
Christmas Lights		£8,000.00	£8,000.00
Crime Prevention	£2,000.00		£0.00
Litter bins	£2,157.00		£0.00
Vistry land by balancing pond		£35,000.00	£4,000.00
Events			
New stage shelter		£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Apple Day	£176.79	£1,676.79	£1,500.00
Queen's Jubilee			
10 Years Community Hall			
Halloween			
Remembrance Sunday	£500.00	£9,000.00	£6,000.00
Carol Service			
Christmas Lights			
Panto			
Grants			
To organisations		£10,000.00	£10,000.00

Community Hall			
Sink Fund	£20,000.00	£50,000.00	£10,000.00
General Maintenance		£3,500.00	£3,500.00
Annual Build Insurance		£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Annual Equipment Grant		£2,500.00	£2,500.00
Orchards			
Grass cutting		£1,300.00	£1,300.00
Tree Maintenance	£500.00	£2,500.00	£2,000.00
Tree Survey		£200.00	£200.00
New Trees	£300.00	£300.00	£0.00
Contingency	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£0.00
Ongoing Projects inc £35,000 payment received from Campbell Buchanan George 14/9/15			
Garden of Rest / Reflection	£25,000.00	£80,000.00	£20,000.00
Allotments	£22,445.00	£80,000.00	£21,713.50
Trim Trail	£19,800.00	£19,800.00	£0.00
Additional Parking			
Kipling Crescent	£43,402.50	£0.00	£-43,402.50
Expanding Bowls Club / Cricket Club car park	£20,000.00	£30,000.00	£0.00
Maintenance of Bannatynes overflow car park	£10,000.00		
Reserves			
Cash Flow (minimum 3 months)	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£0.00
Contingency	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£0.00
Total	£202,955.61	£431,776.79	£110,311.00

REASON

To organise events, support organisations and manage existing areas whilst continuing to build funds so FPC can provide facilities and amenities for the community once land becomes available. Grants and / or loans will need to be investigated to meet any shortfall and will be applied for where possible.

The clerk to return the Precept Request Form to CBC by 17th January 2022. **Action: KH**

232 Correspondence

232.1 Best Bedfordshire School Trust – CBC's response to the open letter to the Central Bedfordshire Council Executive on the Schools for the Future programme and Best's response.

232.2 There was no urgent correspondence.

233 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.

233.1 There was no other business.

234 Date of next meetings

234.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 13th January 2021 at 7.00 pm in the Community Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.20 pm

Glossary of acronyms

AGM	Annual General Meeting
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
NB	Nota bene (Latin phrase meaning 'note well')
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
WI	Women's Institute