

# FURNEUX PELHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes** of the meeting held on Thursday, 3 November 2016, at 8pm in the Furneux Pelham Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllr S Bratt, Cllr C Cantes, Cllr R Gale, Cllr H Smart and Cllr Mrs D White.

**In attendance:** F Forth, Parish Clerk and 4 members of the public.

## 1) Apologies

None.

## 2) Adoption of previous minutes

It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15 September 2016 as a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed the Minutes.

## 3) Declarations of interest

Declaration made by Cllr R Gale in relation to being a part owner of the Common Land at East End. In addition, it was RESOLVED to approve Cllr R Gale's application for dispensation in respect of Common Land.

## 4) Matters arising

- a. Barleycroft works - update provided by Cllr S Bratt that very little had happened since the Parish Council had written to East Herts. It has been identified that the Parish Council can not pursue a complaint against the District Council but a private individual can. Numerous complaints continue to be received, including comments on Facebook of poor driving in respect of the lorries. The Parish Council will continue to press for the action promised by East Herts Council with the support of a private resident.  
The Chair highlighted that he would be attending a meeting, with Cllr H Smart, to hear details of the potential redevelopment of this site for housing.
- b. Parishioner feedback - at the last meeting it was agreed to reimburse Cllr H Smart for the work undertaken in respect of the potholes at Whitebarns Lane. This was declined by Cllr H Smart who was thanked for his gesture.
- c. Donation to toddler group - no progress has been made on this matter.

- d. Whitebarns flats - the Chair had investigated this matter although it had been difficult to speak with Circle Housing. The site had been seen and the drain was operating fine therefore not a Highways issue.
- e. Common land - Cllr H Smart clarified that given that adverse possession of a part of the common land had been granted that no further action was required in respect of correspondence previously received. The suggested formation of a group to manage the common land was welcomed by the Parish Council.  
The Chair suggested that the Parish Council take adverse ownership of the remainder of the common land where there is no owner considering that the Parish Council has taken responsibility for this land. Following a discussion on whether the Parish Council could actually do this, it was agreed to explore the viability of the rights of the Parish Council to seek adverse ownership, the benefits to the village and residents of doing so together with the cost implications. **Action: Cllr R Gale**
- f. Allotments - as yet, the school have not been contacted regarding the vacant plots available.
- g. Village Hall - see Item 9 below

## 5) Parishioner feedback

### Highways

The Chair reported that Highways had been chased regarding faults.

It was also reported that the south side parapet of the bridge by the sewerage works was cracked. As this does not impede traffic, a repair is not high on the agenda.

The road at The Wash is being resurfaced.

### Whitebarns Lane

Cllr H Smart provided a recap on the position relating to Whitebarns Lane.

Highways agreed that it has maintained this road in the past but should not have done so as it was not an adopted road. The road can be adopted but it has to be at a maintainable standard beforehand. Highways would contribute 10% of the cost of bringing the road up to standard but the total cost could be up to approximately £75,000 and residents would have to find the balance. Further discussion with the County Council is likely to be protracted and in the meantime one solution is to fill the potholes on a regular basis until the matter is fully resolved. In response to a question raised by a resident about the potential liability of the relevant local authority for failing to disclose the fact that access to Whitebarns is via an unadopted road it was speculated that a statute

of limitations might apply but individual residents should make their own enquiries.

## 6) Mary Wheatley Trust

The appointment of Trustees to the Mary Wheatley Trust was discussed due to the forthcoming retirement of D Pigg. It was RESOLVED that Cllr S Bratt be appointed.

## 7) Finance

### a. Update on current financial position

A statement of the budget to actual comparison as at 3 November was received. The financial position is on target to date.

### b. Expenditure

It was RESOLVED to approve the following expenditure:

- Village Hall hire £36.00
- Express Picture Framing, web costs £21.00
- Fred Knight, litter picking £63.50

Cheques and supporting documentation were duly signed.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk's salary for November and December be approved and cheques to be signed when due.

### c. Approval of direct debit in favour of Affinity Water

The Clerk explained that due to the timing of meetings and the bills that reminders were frequently received. Putting in place a direct debit would solve this issue. It was RESOLVED that a direct debit in favour of Affinity Water be approved. Direct debit form duly signed.

### d. Forward financial plan 2017/18 to 2012/22

The forward financial plan was discussed and considered that whilst the precept should be increased, there is no need to do so in the immediate future. New homes are currently being built therefore there is an expectation that further New Homes Bonus will be received.

### e. Donation to the Toddler Group

Further information is still being sought and therefore matter deferred to the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

### f. Donation requests

RESOLVED that no donation would be made to either Herts Air Ambulance or Marie Curie as there is no specific benefit to the village.

## 8) Allotments

Cllr Mrs D White reported that contact with school had not been made but vacant plots had been advertised in Buntingford. The all-weather footpath is being laid this weekend and no issues evident with the fencing. Will be losing a couple of plot holders next year which will mean 6 full vacant plots.

## 9) Village Hall Committee

Cllr Mrs D White reported that the 'Music by the Lake' had been successful. The money raised, £2,650, will be used for repairs to the kitchen. Currently not known whether this includes putting in a window. **Action: Cllr Mrs D White**

## 10) Correspondence

### a. Planning applications

All planning applications received have been circulated.

### b. Communications to Parish Clerk

Parish Clerk reported on the following:

- Hertford Museum will be exhibiting in relation to the Pelham's in Spring 2017. Museum welcomes contributions and have arranged an event in the Village Hall, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2017, to meet people willing to share stories, memories, photographs or objects;
- Attended the Rural and Urban Parish Conference, run by East Herts Council, where presenters focused on 2 underlying themes: tackling problems such as health and wellbeing (including social isolation and loneliness) and improving the attractiveness of parishes. Presentation slides are available on EHC's website. Amongst ideas were:
  - Turning the management of village halls away from 'a hall to hire' to 'a community hub'; and
  - Doing welcome packs for new residents; and
- HAPTC training course attended which highlighted that some additional governance documentation is required as well as arrangements should the Parish Clerk be suddenly unavailable.

### c. Communications to or from Councillors

Chair referred to the vacancy that currently exists. A name had been received but this did not progress beyond an initial exchange. A resident present declined the opportunity. It was highlighted that it would be ideal to have representation from Barleycroft End.

**Action: All Cllrs**

Cllr Mrs White reported she had received an anonymous complaint regarding parking at Barleycroft End. Chair stated nothing could be done as it was outside the Parish Council's remit.

## **11) Residents comments**

### Telecommunications

Raised that there have been several incidents where residents have had no phone lines because of poor infrastructure. As this could put people at risk should the Parish Council maintain a watching brief? Response was that this is not within the Parish Council's remit and BT will only talk to individual subscribers. BT fault number to be added to the community page of the website and residents reminded to phone in faults. **Action: Clerk**

## **12) Next meeting**

Subject to the Village Hall being available, it was agreed that the next meeting be moved from the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2017 to the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017. **Action: Clerk**

In addition, notification received that the Village Hall is booked on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017 for the County Council election. Subject to the Village Hall being available, it was agreed to move this meeting to the 11<sup>th</sup> May. **Action: Clerk**

The meeting ended at 9:26pm.