

# FURNEUX PELHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes** of the meeting held on Thursday, 7 March 2019, at 8:07 pm in the Furneux Pelham Village Hall.

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

**In attendance:** F Forth, Parish Clerk and 8 members of the public.

## 19/15) Apologies

None.

## 19/16) Declarations of interest

None.

## 19/17) Adoption of previous minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

## 19/18) Report on outstanding matters

- a. Whitebarns Lane - see item 19/19 below.
- b. Playground - see item 19/20 below.

## 19/19) Whitebarns Lane

For the benefit of those present, the Chair summarised the position. It had been thought that Clarion owned the south end of the lane but an extract from the conveyance proved that this was not the case. Whitebarns Close had been mislabelled on the conveyance as Whitebarns Lane.

Since the last meeting, EHC Ward Cllr G Williamson had instigated a search of East Herts archives, back to the 1940's, and nothing had been found. The Chair reported that he had reviewed the minutes of Braughing Rural District Council, the local authority at the time Whitebarns was established, and equally found nothing. In addition, a special search at the Land Registry had highlighted that the lane itself is not actually registered. This doesn't mean that it has no owner, just that the owner is not known.

Cllr H Smart stated that there was one aspect of the conveyance that still needed to be followed up. This aspect is that the transfer from East Herts includes an obligation to maintain access.

Clarion are disputing any obligation and it needs to be recognised that it is likely that there will be no solution for many years.

During the discussion, reference was made to:

- the section of the lane in question is designated as a footpath and the maintenance standard for a footpath is not high. In addition, that due to the proximity of houses, it was not possible to improve the road to a standard where it could be adopted as it would not be possible to achieve the current required width for a road;
- suggestion that the applicant for the construction of a house on land adjacent to The Spinney would need access and repair the lane but caveated with the fact that planning permission doesn't consider access;
- due to an overgrown hedge, the ditch on the opposite side of the road is being damaged;
- difficulties that residents face in selling properties as the access issue results in prospective purchasers not getting mortgages due to the access issue;
- someone could put a stake in the ground in order to claim ownership in 7 years' time although acknowledged that ownership does not mean a requirement to maintain;
- it is believed to be a criminal offence to drive over a footpath without the landowner's consent; and
- liability issues regarding making own repairs to the lane.

In addition, residents requested that the Parish Council take action to address the overgrown hedge. Whilst acknowledging the limited powers of the Parish Council, it was agreed that a letter would be sent. In addition, if no action resulted, the details would be passed on to East Herts Council.

Finally, the Chair reminded those present that any ideas on alternative actions welcomed.

**Action: Chair/Cllr H Smart (Obligation to maintain access) and Clerk (Letter re overgrown hedge)**

## 19/20)      **Playground**

At the last meeting, the Chair reported that there had been a lukewarm response to progressing the playground from residents. Since that meeting, an alternative location had been identified for the playground. The owners of The Brewery Tap would be willing lease space at the bottom of its car park for a playground as the existing pub playground is no longer in a fit state. Access to the playground would be through the car park and not the pub. Benefits of this solution seen as:

- no reduction in the Parish Council car park;
- new owners of the pub are willing to help and encourage fundraising for the playground; and
- and if the Parish Council leases the land, it provides access to grants for playground equipment.

Following a lengthy discussion, there was support for helping the pub to develop a playground, potentially including funding assistance but that the Parish Council shouldn't take on the responsibility for installing and maintaining a playground. Ultimately, there should be no legal or financial responsibilities accruing to the Parish Council. It was agreed that action should be taken to formulate and define an arrangement with the pub to achieve this.

**Action: Cllr P Watmough**

## 19/21)      **Magazine**

The Chair highlighted that he would be attending a meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March to discuss the parish magazine - St Mary's Review. Braughing have indicated that they are seeking to create an alternative/possible replacement "wellness" magazine that would be delivered free to all households in Braughing. Following the meeting, key points would be circulated. **Action: Chair**

It was identified that there had been no prior discussion with the Parish Magazine Committee. It was also noted that Furneux Pelham could also be involved in any revamp of the magazine.

## 19/22) Barleycroft End

CLlr P Watmough highlighted that residents have raised concerns about the speed of traffic entering the village at Barleycroft End and at The Causeway. He made a number of suggestions for addressing this: traffic calming; flashing signs; rumble strips and moving the "30mph" sign. After discussion, including highlighting the process for changing a speed limit, the following was agreed:

- clarify why the "30mph" sign has been placed where it has been;
- investigate "welcome to the village" and "20's plenty" signs;
- arrange for the "slow down" paint markings on the road to be renewed;
- organise a presentation from the PCSO on "Drive Safe"; and
- find out why the zigzag lines by the school are shorter than they were originally and identify if can be made longer again.

**Action: Clerk to discuss with Ward County Cllr**

## 19/23) Annual Parish Assembly

The Clerk reminded those present that a few years ago, after getting feedback from parishioners, an action plan was developed. Attempts to do this in recent years had not been successful but that perhaps Cllrs themselves should do this. The Chair agreed to develop a draft for circulation that could be considered at the Annual Parish Assembly. Residents present were reminded that they were welcome to attend and contribute to this action plan. **Action: Chair**

## 19/24) Finance

### a. Update on current financial position

A statement of the budget to actual comparison as at 10<sup>th</sup> January, as circulated, was received.

### b. Expenditure

RESOLVED to approve the following expenditure:

L Gale, Welcome Pack wallets	£7.98
Fred Knight, litter picking & grass cutting	£45.50
Clerk's 2018/19 pay award	£38.05
Clerk's expenses	£231.78

Cheques and supporting documentation duly signed.

In addition, the direct debit payment to Affinity for Business for allotment water of £22.38 was noted.

- c. Standing Order for Clerk's salary  
RESOLVED to approve the Standing Order for the Clerk's salary for April 2019 to March 2020 at £166.83 per month.
- d. Allotment fees  
Following discussion, it was RESOLVED to retain the current fee structure of £35.00 for a full plot and £17.50 for a half plot. In addition, there is a 50% discount if an existing plot holder introduces a new one.
- e. Car park fees  
RESOLVED to maintain the car park fee at £50.
- f. Donation to "Cottontails" - new mother and toddler group  
The Clerk explained the documentation that had been circulated prior to the meeting in terms of the donation request that had been made. Following discussion, it was RESOLVED to make a donation for a specific purpose, namely £150 to cover the shortfall on the set-up costs and £50 to cover 5 weeks Village Hall rent.

#### **19/25) Allotments**

Cllr Mrs D White reported that Sarah Hills-Wright had agreed to take over her responsibilities for the allotments. The Allotment AGM had been held on 21<sup>st</sup> February and vacant plots increased by a half plot.

#### **19/26) Village Hall Committee**

Cllr Mrs D White stated that the recent Village Hall Committee meeting had highlighted that it was in a good financial position and no fund raising is currently planned. In addition, it was highlighted that a replacement Parish Council representative was required given her resignation.

#### **19/27) Correspondence**

- a. Planning applications  
Since the last meeting, 3 applications considered, 2 permissions granted, and 1 application refused permission.  
  
Details of all applications are on the Parish Council's website and those since the last meeting are detailed in Appendix A.

Following an enquiry by the Chair in relation to the Ashbrook planning application, Cllr H Smart explained that this site could be considered as "infill". The risk is that if planning permission is granted, it would extend the boundary of the village. As usual, the Parish Council will defer to the planners to make the appropriate decision.

b. Communications to Parish Clerk

The Clerk referred to the following matters:

- Election - hard copy of the candidate documentation for the election provided to all sitting Cllrs, excluding Cllr Mrs D White as she has resigned, and the key points highlighted as:
  - election is being called on the 21<sup>st</sup> March;
  - nomination pack, in its entirety, must be hand delivered to East Herts Council, in Hertford, by 4pm on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April;
  - need a minimum of 3 candidates although the ideal is at least 6 candidates;
  - if more than 6 candidates, there will be a cost to the Parish Council which is unknown, and 6 or less means an uncontested election;
  - will know on the 4<sup>th</sup> April whether contested or not;
  - electoral roll has been provided to support completion of the forms but need to remember that this is personal data;
  - posters can be used to promote the Parish Council;
  - after the election and before the Annual meeting, a get together will be organised to sign documentation etc.
- Salvation Army (SA) recycling clothing bin - following the previous meeting, this has been arranged and the recycling bin is expected soon. It will be sited towards the rear of the car park, near to where it dips. Meeting with the SA representative confirmed that there really is no cost to the Parish Council. Once in place, its existence will be promoted; and
- binding of minutes - following showing an example of bound minutes, agreed that the Clerk should pursue this for Furneux Pelham. **Action: Clerk**

c. Communications to or from Councillors

None.

**19/28) Residents comments**

Residents highlighted that the unpredictable road closures make life difficult and have had a detrimental impact on local businesses. The Clerk agreed to raise with the County Councillor. **Action: Clerk**

In response to a question regarding a replacement sub-contractor for Gigaclear, the Chair responded that nothing was known as yet.

[Post meeting note: new contractor now appointed by Gigaclear.]

**19/29) Next meeting**

Confirmed that the next meeting of the Parish Council is on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in the Village Hall at 8pm. It is preceded by the Annual Parish Assembly at 7:30pm and everyone is welcome to attend.

Finally, the Chair thanked Cllr Mrs D White for her years of service and work in relation to the Parish Council, Village Hall and the allotments, and wished her well for the future.

The meeting ended at 9:49 pm.

## Planning activity since the previous meeting:

Application number	Proposal	Action
<u>3/19/0379/FUL</u>	Two 5 bed detached dwellings with detached double garage for each dwelling at Land At Ashbrook (Adj To Perrymill), The Causeway.	Application considered
<u>3/19/0362/HH</u> & <u>3/19/0363/LBC</u>	Single storey side and rear extension at Gables Cottage, Patient End.	Application considered
<u>3/19/0347/FUL</u>	Construction of a 5 bedroom detached house and single detached garage with creation of 4 parking spaces at Land Adj The Spinney, Whitebarns.	Application considered
<u>3/18/2806/HH</u>	Construction of first floor side extension and front porch at 4 The Street.	Permission granted
<u>3/18/2634/HH</u>	Demolition of conservatory and rear extension; erection of part two storey and single storey rear extensions; alterations to flank windows at 1 and 2 Brick Cottages, The Street.	Permission refused
<u>3/18/2438/HH</u>	Part demolition of single storey front extension, erection of two single storey extensions with pitched roof at front at Tinkers Barn, The Street.	Permission granted