

FURNEUX PELHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on Thursday, 2 July 2020, at 8:03 pm

Present: Cllr S Bratt, Cllr R Gale, Cllr T Langlois, Cllr H Smart and Cllr P Watmough.

In attendance: F Forth, Parish Clerk and 3 members of the public.

Prior to the meeting starting, the Chair thanked Cllr P Watmough for hosting the meeting and reminded those present that there was a specific public agenda item later on for residents but the rest of the agenda was for Cllrs only.

20/46) Apologies

None.

20/47) Declarations of interest

None.

20/48) Chair's announcements

None.

20/49) Adoption of previous minutes

The Clerk apologised that the minutes for the March meeting were not available. These will be circulated with the minutes of tonight's meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 26th May 2020, to discuss providing a grant to The Brewery Tap towards its playground and shop, be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

20/50) Report on outstanding matters

Pallets yard

The Chair reported that a resident is still seeking to get East Herts Council to pursue compliance with planning conditions at this site.

20/51) Vacancy

The Clerk reported that a resident had expressed an interest in being co-opted as a Cllr. Unfortunately, the required documentation had not been received in time for this meeting. Co-option would be considered at the September meeting and the deadline for submitting the required forms (detailed in the Co-option Policy on the Parish Council's website) was the 21st August.

20/52) Spruce up the village

Cllr B Gale reported that the list of defective road signs had been provided to Herts County but no action as yet since the County are focusing on other COVID related matters.

The Chair commented that there were no road marking near his property which was causing problems as people were not stopping at the "Stop" signs. Following discussion, it was agreed that a survey should be undertaken around the village in conjunction with a representative from Highways.

Action: Survey - Cllr B Gale

20/53) Internal Controls

20/54) Annual Governance & Accountability Return

Items deferred as the internal audit review could not be completed before this meeting. As the Internal Audit review is planned for the 18th July, agreed to meet on Thursday 30th July to cover these two agenda items.

20/55) Governance documentation

The Clerk reminded those present that each year, the Parish Council's governance documentation is reviewed to ensure it is up to date and remains appropriate. No changes to the existing documentation were proposed as, over the last 12 months, no matters had been raised to necessitate any revision. The Clerk reminded those present that the Government COVID-19 guidelines are additional to the Parish Council's documentation and should be followed.

RESOLVED to reapprove the existing governance documentation.

20/56) Finance

a. Update on current financial position

The financial statement for the current position was noted. The Clerk highlighted the following matters:

- Cllr T Langlois had successfully obtained a £450 grant for the fish & chip supper for older people in the village - planned for 25th September; and
- a saving of £60 had been achieved by switching the Parish Council's insurance from Zurich to a sector specific insurer.

In addition, the Clerk reported that a letter drop - on to cars and to houses - would be undertaken soon for carpark payments. Cllr T Langlois agreed to help.

b. Expenditure

It was noted that the following payments had been made within budget allocations:

HAPTC, subscription	£314.08
HAPTC, training materials	£20.00
Fred Knight, litter picking & grass cutting	£73.25
Business Services @ CAS, insurance	£291.20

c. Forward Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2024/25

The Clerk highlighted that the Forward Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2024/25, approved in January 2020, had been amended following the meeting to discuss the grants to The Brewery Tap.

The Parish Council was holding a high level of funds but it was not clear that part of this was the unspent New Homes Bonus. This Bonus cannot be used to cover the running costs of the Parish Council but must be used for investing in the parish which is why the unspent Bonus to date had been used to fund the above mentioned grants. As a small parish, the level of funds held should be between 50-100% of the annual costs of the Parish Council and, by 2024/25, the available balance will be within this parameter.

In addition, the following amendments were made:

- recommending that the precept be increased by £1,000 annually from 2021/22 until it reaches £7,000 in the financial year 2023/24. Should any New Homes Bonus be received, this is used for projects that benefit the parish - either directly by the Parish Council or through grants to other organisations - with any unspent monies being clearly detailed;
- insurance cost had been reduced to reflect the lower cost paid in the current financial year - just under £60 each year;
- computer security of £80 had been removed. This had been to purchase something like McAfee for the laptop but this is no longer considered necessary as the built-in products are sufficient given the low level of personal data held by the Parish Council; and

- the capital budget of £2,000 each year had been removed. The Parish Council rarely identifies appropriate capital projects, and potentially, any future New Homes Bonus could be used. Based on the last schedule provided, the Parish Council could receive £2,799 this financial year and £1,758 in each of the following two years.

Following discussion, it was agreed to confirm that the funds being set aside for the allotment fence were required. If needed, this could be funded from any future New Homes Bonus.

RESOLVED to approve the revised Forward Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2024/25.

Action: Allotment fence - Cllr S Bratt

d. Donation

The Clerk stated that a request had been received, and previously circulated, from the Church Treasurer for a donation of around £500. When making the request, the costs associated with maintaining the churchyard had been provided: strimming and grass cutting (£1,400) and tree removal quoted at £1,000. The Clerk also drew attention to the fact that the previous donation had not been properly accounted for in the Restoration Fund and that the Church Treasurer had apologised for this.

Following discussion, RESOLVED to donate £500 to the Furneux Pelham Parochial Church Council.

The Clerk was asked to reiterate to the Church Treasurer that the Parish Council expects this donation to be administered correctly and to be used for the purposes requested.

20/57) Police

The Clerk reported that PCSO Leon de Bruyn had provided the following crime statistics for the period of 7th May to 23rd June:

- theft from a caravan storage facility - items had been removed from inside a stationary caravan over a period of 3 months and there were no lines of enquiry; and

- criminal damage - windscreen of a vehicle parked at a residential property had been smashed by unknown offenders and no lines of enquiry.

In addition, it was highlighted that there had been a noticeable increase in thefts from out buildings, so a reminder to residents to take extra precautions when securing their sheds, garages and barns etc and to remain vigilant to any suspicious behaviour and report incidents using the non-emergency 101 number.

20/58) Update from East Herts Council (EHC)

Cllr G Williamson (EHC) had given his apologies for this meeting and sent a short report relating to the action taken to obtain a High Court injunction preventing occupation of a second traveller encampment in Little Hadham.

Update from Herts County Council (HCC)

Cllr G McAndrew (HCC) attended the meeting to provide a brief update [8:41 to 8:51 pm]. He referred to the grant of £5,000, from his Locality Budget as part of "Operation Community", to over social prescribing/connection work from the Hadhams through to the Pelhams.

Cllr B Gale referred to the list of white lines and street furniture that had been submitted to County for action and Cllr G McAndrew agreed to follow this up.

Cllr G McAndrew also stated that the speed and volume traffic study through the Hadhams to the Pelhams will be undertaken once the traffic flows return to normal after the COVID-19 lockdown.

20/59) Planning applications

The Clerk highlighted that since the last meeting (March), 6 applications had been considered, 2 applications granted permission and 3 applications had been refused permission.

Details of all applications are on the Parish Council's website and those since the last meeting are detailed in Appendix A

In addition, the Clerk reported that a resident had requested information on the development areas in the village and she had referred them to East Herts Council's Policies Map - linked to the District Plan.

Finally, for information, the Clerk provided details on how planning enforcement worked within East Herts.

20/60) Clerk's information

The Clerk referred to the following matters:

- in relation to the A120 bypass, The Ford in Little Hadham will be closed 24/7 from the 9th July to the 1st September; and
- "Stop Stansted Expansion" has a new website.

20/61) Councillor updates

Cllr P Watmough reported that positive feedback had been heard in relation to The Brewery Tap indicating that it was becoming the community hub that had been hoped for. The Chair reported that the latest edition of "The Pelhams" magazine included a thank you from the owners of The Brewery Tap for the support they had received from the Parish Council and others.

Cllr B Gale reminded the Clerk to ensure that the car park hedge was cut in September. In addition, he raised whether Parish Council could contribute to the Nature Centre in Stocking Pelham as it had been a wonderful facility for local school children. **Action:** Identify more information - Cllr B Gale

20/62) Residents comments

A resident thanked Cllr T Langlois for the work she had been doing to help people during COVID-19 with picking up prescriptions etc. The resident believed that some people were financially struggling locally, and it was highlighted by Cllr H Smart that the Parish Council has no legal powers to work in this area. In addition, the Clerk agreed to put the resident in touch with the group providing support in this area.

Further praise was provided for The Brewery Tap for what it is doing and for the playground.

Issues with speeding traffic along the Old Common were raised by a resident with a request for traffic calming or flashing signs. Cllr P Watmough highlighted that this had been raised before and reason for the proposed speed and volume traffic study referred to earlier. In addition, the Clerk suggested that these issues can be reported to the police via "Echo", explaining that if sufficient reports received, the police could target the area for patrols.

(Details of ECHO to be provided in the August magazine)

20/63) Next meeting

Confirmed that the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held virtually on 30th July 2020 at 7 pm to approve the documentation in relation to internal controls and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Confirmed that the next full meeting of the Parish Council will be held virtually on 3rd September 2020 at 7 pm.

The meeting ended at 9:16 pm.

Planning activity since the previous meeting:

Application number	Proposal	Action
<u>3/20/0985/HH</u>	Erection of a two-storey side extension, erection of a front roof dormer and front porch, a ground floor rear extension and first floor rear infill extension at South View, Violets Lane.	Application considered
<u>3/20/0965/FUL</u>	Highly sustainable new build detached house at Land Adjacent Village Hall Parking, Violets Lane.	Application considered
<u>3/20/0761/HH</u>	Detached carport/store at Lavengro, The Street.	Application considered Permission granted
<u>3/20/0705/FUL</u>	Erection of a three bedroom dwelling and cart lodge at Land Adj Spring Paddocks, East End.	Application considered Permission refused
<u>3/20/0647/HH</u> & <u>3/20/0648/LBC</u>	Ground floor extension to create ground floor WC and new entrance porch at Duck Street Cottage, The Street.	Application considered
<u>3/20/0603/HH</u>	Rear first floor part roof extension and alterations to fenestration at 4 Whitebarns.	Application considered Permission granted
<u>3/20/0330/LBC</u>	Construction of detached car port and single storey rear/side extension; new ground floor window opening on west elevation; internal alterations to include removal of internal ways and inserting new internal walls at Lavengro, The Street.	Permission refused

Application number	Proposal	Action
<u>3/20/0230/HH</u>	Construction of detached double car port and single rear/side extension at Lavengro, The Street.	Permission refused