

FURNEUX PELHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 5 March 2020, at 8:07 pm in the Furneux Pelham Village Hall.

Present: Cllr S Bratt, Cllr R Gale and Cllr H Smart.

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

Prior to the meeting starting, the Chair stated that it was possible that the meeting could be recorded with or without the knowledge of those present.

20/22) Apologies

Apologies were received and approved from Cllr Mrs T Langlois and Cllr P Watmough.

20/23) Declarations of interest

None.

20/24) Chair's announcements

The Chair reported that Dr Julie Ramsey had passed away today.

20/25) Adoption of previous minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 9th January 2020 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

Herts Rally 2020

A representative of the Herts Rally attended to provide a further update on the event. The schedule for the event has not been finalised but all those affected by the route have been met with. The rally stage will now be running from Little Hornead to Braughing, and the safety requirements for all corners are being addressed as well as how each way point can be made safe. The church is considering providing refreshments and the remaining local issue to address will be where to park.

20/26) Report on outstanding matters

The Clerk reported that most outstanding matters had been detailed as specific items on the agenda.

The Chair provided an update on the work being undertaken by a resident in relation to the pallet yard. It appears that East Herts Council have a false view of the matter. East Herts have assumed that all matters had been resolved since the Parish Council had taken no action since submitting a detailed

complaint in 2016 whereas the reality is that no response had been received from them in response to the 2016 correspondence. It was agreed that the Chair would write to East Herts Council accordingly.

Action: letter - Cllr S Bratt

Cllr H Smart reported that planned response to a Cllr's inaccurate, false and inappropriate comments towards the Clerk was not made as the Cllr involved had subsequently resigned.

20/27) Vacancy

The Clerk reported that the vacancy had been advertised and no requests for an election had been received by East Herts Council. Consequently, the Parish Council can now co-opt in line with its Policy and this will be advertised. Cllrs also agreed to identify and encourage potential candidates.

20/28) Whitebarns Lane

The Chair provided an update, stating that this would be the final update as the Parish Council had taken this matter as far as it realistically could.

The potential non-compliance with the Highways Act 1988, reported at the January 2020 meeting (Minute ref: 20/6), was discussed in the free legal advice session organised by HAPTC after the January meeting. The legal view was that it would be difficult to pursue this point given that, technically, the Lane was not classed as a road in the first place. The recommendations for the next steps were:

- residents of Whitebarns Lane that are tenants of Clarion can complain to Clarion and, if the result is unsatisfactory, can raise the matter with the Housing Ombudsman; and
- for other residents, which could include Clarion on behalf of its tenants, could set up a limited company to take on the responsibility of filling potholes etc.

20/29) Tree donation

The Clerk explained the background to the offer of free trees from the Rye Street Group. Following discussion, it was agreed to seek an order of 50 of the smaller varieties that could be distributed around the village.

20/30) Allotments

Following discussion, RESOLVED to approve the allotment lease.

The Clerk reported on behalf the Allotment Manager that currently half the plots are vacant, the Allotment AGM is being planned for early April and that he will cover the cost of weed spray for the vacant plots in order to keep these under control. In addition, he is seeking to reduce the number of vacant plots through engagement with residents.

20/31) Annual Parish Assembly

In discussion, it was highlighted that despite trying different formats, it has been difficult to get local residents to engage with the Annual Parish Assembly. It was agreed that an informal canvass of residents' views would be sought on the format which would be finalised in April as the Assembly takes place in May.

20/32) Spruce up the village

Cllr B Gale reported that details of the signs required had been reported to Herts County Council (HCC). In addition, HCC had replaced the stiles on Footpath 6. Finally, it was noted that the daffodils planted earlier were coming up.

20/33) Highways - traffic speed

On behalf of Cllr P Watmough, the Clerk reported that no further local reports of speeding vehicles were known of.

The Chair reported that traffic survey needs to be undertaken before a "flashing" sign can be pursued. It was also noted that the "Drive Safe" option should be pursued.

20/34) Finance

a. Update on current financial position

The financial statement for the current position was noted. There were no matters to highlight.

b. Expenditure

RESOLVED to approve the following expenditure:

Village Hall, Hall hire	£36.00
Clerk's expenses	£143.77

Cheques and supporting documentation duly signed.

In addition, the direct debit payment to Affinity for Business for allotment water of £22.32 was noted. The Clerk also noted that Castle Water, who had been trying to bill the Parish Council for wastewater at the Allotments, had finally cancelled all the bills it had issued.

RESOLVED to approve the payment to Tees, for 50% of the expected cost of the Allotment lease, to a maximum of £350, once the invoice was received.

c. Standing Order for Clerk's salary

RESOLVED to approve the Standing Order for the Clerk's salary for April 2020 to March 2021, £262.17 per month

d. Allotment fees

Following discussion, it was RESOLVED to retain the current fee structure of £35 for a full plot and £17.50 for a half plot. It was noted that the legal fee for the lease renewal was expected to be around £600.

e. Car park fees

Following discussion, RESOLVED to maintain the level of car park fees at £50 for the coming year.

f. HAPTC Subscription

RESOLVED to approve the subscription payment to HAPTC of £314.08, due on 1st April 2020. The Chair commented that HAPTC has been very helpful.

g. Donation to Stop Stansted Expansion

Following discussion, it was agreed that no donation would be made to Stop Stansted Expansion as such a payment would not comply with the Parish Council's Donations Policy. In addition, it was noted that the Parish Council has never discussed whether it was supporting this campaign or not.

Other

The Chair commented that he had identified that the last donation to Furneux Pelham Parochial Church Council (PCC), for churchyard maintenance, had not been properly accounted for the PCC's accounts. Instead of the donation being paid into the Restoration Account, which covers the churchyard maintenance, it had been paid into the General Account which covers the running costs of the church. The Parish Council has no powers to donate towards the running costs of the church. Following discussion, it was agreed that the PCC Treasurer would be reminded to properly account for the Parish Council's donations in the future.

20/35) Police

PCSO Leon de Bruyn provided the following report:

- noticeable police activity around Whitebarns Lane as the Police stopped and intercepted 2 suspects with regards to traffic and drug related offences. Enquiries led to a third suspect also being arrested at the same location and the Police continue to monitor the area for public reassurance;
- burglary - a residential property was targeted and gardening tools were removed from an external outbuilding. It is believed the premises was accessed by a cut in the perimeter fencing; and
- the new communication platform, Echo has also now been sent out on OWL/NHW alert for the community.

20/36) Update from East Herts Council (EHC)

Cllr G Williamson (EHC) had given his apologies for this meeting and sent a short report covering:

- the travellers in Little Hadham had won their appeal on their planning application to set up a number of pitches on the land they have been occupying since Easter last year. East Herts Council has been seeking legal advice on whether there are grounds for challenge;
- East Herts has launched a new round of community grants and details can be found here <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/community-wellbeing/funding-community-organisations-and-individuals>;
- Northgate End car park in Bishop's Stortford closes on 20th April to allow the construction of the new multi-storey car park, partially on the same site, to commence; and

- the main road through Little Hadham will be closed for five weeks from 26th May, meaning those wishing to get to Much Hadham and beyond will need to find alternative routes.

20/37) Planning applications

The Clerk highlighted that since the last meeting, 2 applications had been considered and 1 application 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

20/38) Clerk's information

The Clerk highlighted that Stansted Airport had started work on considering the future airspace as part of the Governments national programme to modernise the way UK airspace is managed.

20/39) Councillor updates

Cllr B Gale reminded the Clerk that the hedge needed cutting. In addition, he commented that Herts County Council will arrange for pavements to be cleaned if reported to them.

20/40) Residents comments

A resident expressed thanks that the area around the Salvation Army bin had been cleared up.

20/41) Next meeting

Confirmed that the next meeting of the Parish Council is on the 14th May 2020 in the Village Hall at 8pm, preceded by the Annual Parish Assembly at 7:30 pm.

Note - date change due to the Police Commissioner election on the 7th May.

The meeting ended at 9:15 pm.

Planning activity since the previous meeting:

Application number	Proposal	Action
<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.	Application considered
<u>3/20/0230/HH</u>	Construction of detached double car port and single rear/side extension at Lavengro, The Street.	Application considered
<u>3/19/2466/HH</u>	Demolition of conservatory and erection of single storey side extension; two storey rear extension, single storey side extension to incorporate new front entrance and utility room at Clay Chimneys House.	Permission refused