

FURNEUX PELHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on Thursday, 14 January 2021, at 7:03 pm

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

In attendance: F Forth, Parish Clerk and 1 member of the public.

21/1) Apologies

None.

21/2) Declarations of interest

Cllr H Smart declared an interest in item 21/12 as he had planning applications detailed on the agenda.

21/3) Chair's announcements

None.

21/4) Adoption of previous minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 5th November 2020 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

21/5) Report on outstanding matters

An update in relation to the following outstanding matters was provided:

- pallets yard - Cllr G Williamson (EHC) stated there was no update at this time;
- road signs and marking - see Minute ref: 21/14;
- Allotment fence - the Chair reported that quotes from local contractors are still being sought;
- Allotment lease - the Clerk reported that, as yet, the page in the lease signed by Cllrs hadn't been obtained and this will be chased;
- Governance documentation - the Clerk stated that Cllr R Rodrigues signed the required documentation the day after the last meeting;
- Condolence letter - with input from the Chair, the Clerk sent a letter of condolence to Mick Isard's family following the last meeting;
- Vacancy - the Clerk reported that the formal confirmation that no election had been called to fill the current vacancy had been received a few days after the last meeting. In addition, she reported that no applications for co-option had been received and a reminder of the vacancy would be advertised, including in the February edition of the Pelhams magazine;

- Barleycroft End - see Minute ref: 21/6;
- Initial forward financial plan - see Minute ref: 21/9 c) and d)
- Environment Agency - the Clerk confirmed that initial contact had been made with the Environment Agency regarding the blockage in the river behind the pub for Cllr R Rodrigues. Cllr R Rodrigues stated that no action had been taken as yet but highlighted that the river was currently flowing; and
- Parish Council responsibilities - the Clerk reported that a listing will be produced to show what the Parish Council can and cannot do, including the organisation to contact if a matter is not the responsibility of the Parish Council, for the Pelhams magazine. In discussion, it was agreed that this should be a permanent entry in the magazine and be undertaken in conjunction with Stocking Pelham.

21/6) Barleycroft End

Drive safe scheme

The Chair reminded those present that investigations into a "Drive Safe Scheme" had been initiated as a result of complaints about speeding along Barleycroft End. Three sites had been identified to position the required equipment: the forecourt of the pub or the Village Hall or a resident's driveway.

The Chair reported that the Police had reviewed these potential sites and confirmed that the forecourt locations would be acceptable but that the resident's driveway was not. In their view, the resident's driveway included the potential for the scheme equipment to see beyond the existing speed limit sign. In addition, the Police highlighted concerns regarding the two acceptable sites, mainly that the parked cars would block the view.

Finally, the Chair stated that those volunteering to undertake the monitoring would have to be trained and this is not possible in the current COVID-19 situation.

Following discussion, it was agreed to defer any further action on this scheme and to revisit it at the May meeting. Reasons being that training is currently not possible and undertaking a traffic survey prior to progressing the scheme would be informative, but the Police are not arranging these whilst in the midst of a pandemic.

Verges

The Chair referred to the photo that he had circulated prior to the meeting, showing the partial layby by the Brookside development where a suggestion had been received that the road could be widened at this point if the verges were removed. It would enable better traffic flows and access to and from all driveways.

In discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- given it is likely that Herts County Council own the verge, getting the County to remove the verge would be a difficult process;
(Note - ownership of the verge would need to be clarified)
- whilst installing yellow lines may be appropriate, this would be difficult to achieve (requires a Traffic Regulation Order) and how would the placement of the lines be determined; and
- perhaps widening the verge could be more appropriate as it may stop people parking in that area.

Cllr H Smart agreed to take the lead on developing a proposal to submit to Herts County Council and Cllr G Williamson (EHC) agreed to raise this issue with Cllr G McAndrew (HCC) as he has responsibilities for Highways.

21/7) Support network

The Clerk highlighted the benefits of a support network, making reference to the Hadhams Community Hub and the work undertaken locally by Cllr T Langlois. Whilst it is recognised that there are a number of organisations around to help residents, it is not always easy to identify the correct one to contact when in a crisis or simply needing a helping hand. A key aspect of the Hadhams Community Hub is the single person and phone number that is used to seek assistance. The person on the end of that phone number can link a person to the correct organisation or a local volunteer to provide whatever assistance is required.

It was proposed that a similar model was introduced for the Pelhams but that the phone would be managed on a rota basis by a small number of volunteers. Whilst Cllr T Langlois was happy to use her personal mobile for this purpose, in discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council would fund a burner phone for this purpose.

Following advice from Cllr G Williamson (EHC), in relation to the Hadhams, to keep records of phone calls to ensure any continuity of assistance to people if a rota is used, it was agreed that the phone would be managed between the Chair and Cllr T Langlois. The Clerk was authorised to purchase a phone for this purpose and, once in use, the phone number will be publicised.

21/8) Parish EV (electric vehicle) charging community hubs project

Cllr B Gale summarised the key points regarding this project from the briefing that had been circulated prior to the meeting, namely:

- project relates to establishing a network of EV charging hubs as the Government has set a target that only electric vehicles can be bought new from 2030 and East Herts Council has a target to be carbon neutral by that year;
- currently, there are 13 charging points in Hertford and Bishop's Stortford, with plans for another 60 in the coming year, as well as some privately funded ones;
- rural areas are a concern as, until now, there are no plans for charging points, excluding those privately owned;
- the project is investigating using village hall car parks as a natural area to place charging points either by East Herts, by the site owner or a combination thereof;
- the parish would not be expected to contribute any funds towards this as the contribution would be 2 parking spaces and access to electricity, the cost of which would be reimbursed;
- locally, it is recognised that the Parish Council own the car park but the Village Hall is managed by a separate charity; and
- the next meeting is in February and where discussion will include whether the Parish Council is supportive of this project and interested in being included.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council is supportive of the concept but considers that there are a number of issues that would need to be resolved going forward. Issues included: quantity of spaces to provide; time to charge; impact on "proper" users of the car park; rapid pace of change in technology may not require this form of solution in the future; administration of the spaces including payment for the electricity consumed.

21/9) Finance

a. Update on current financial position

The financial statement for the current position was noted.

b. Expenditure

RESOLVED to approve the following expenditure:

HAPTC, Cllr training	£30.00
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Cheque and supporting documentation would be signed after the meeting.

c. Approval of budget for 2021/22 and determination of the precept

d. Forward Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25

The Clerk reported that following the November 2020 meeting, the budget and forward financial plan had been updated to reflect paying the minimum hourly wage for litter picking - an annual increase in cost of £50 based on the hours delivered on the last 2 invoices paid by the Parish Council.

In addition, the Clerk highlighted that it has also been agreed at the November 2020 meeting that the carpark would be gravelled to the end, potentially filling in the dip first, as well as topping up the gravel at the front end of the carpark. No quotes have been sought for this work as yet but it would be funded from the remaining New Homes Bonus - currently £1,799 remains after allowing £1,000 for the allotment fence repair.

Finally, the Clerk stated that the Chair had highlighted that the noticeboard at the Village Hall is beyond repair and should be replaced. Options will be investigated.

RESOLVED to approve the budget for 2021/22 and determine the precept at £4,000.

RESOLVED to approve the Forward Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25

e. Donation towards topping up the bark at the Village Playground

The Clerk had circulated with the agenda a request for a donation towards the estimated cost (£680) of topping up the bark in the Village Playground.

In discussion, it was confirmed that the Playground is popular, especially during lockdowns, demonstrating that it is a key community asset.

Whilst recognising that when the Parish Council granted funds to install the Playground, it was on the basis that it would not be covering ongoing costs, dealing with the pandemic is, and has been, an exceptional event to contend with.

RESOLVED to approve a donation of £500 towards the estimated cost of topping up the bark. It was to be noted that this represents the remaining funds that the Parish Council had set aside for donations in this financial year.

21/10) Police

PCSO Leon de Bruyn was unable to attend the meeting but he had provided the following information:

- no reported crimes from the beginning of November through to the end of 2020;
- local policing priorities remain as speeding and fly-tipping and regular patrols continue to be carried out in the local areas; and
- with the extension of the current COVID-19 lockdown measures, the area will also be policed for COVID breaches.

Cllr R Rodrigues highlighted that there had been an increase in dog thefts locally and encouraged people to be vigilant. It was noted that this matter had been covered widely on social media sites.

21/11) Update from East Herts Council (EHC)

Cllr G Williamson (EHC) reported that a change was being made to brown bin services. There is no requirement for this service to be provided free of charge and given the financial position of East Herts, a charge will be introduced from 1st April. The charge will be £49 per annum per bin and residents will have the option of having an additional two brown bins. In addition to the annual charge, each extra bin will incur a one-off cost of £35.

21/12) Planning

The Clerk highlighted that the agenda information was incorrect in respect of the St Mary's Church planning application - the correct action is that the application was refused. It is unclear why an incorrect letter was issued for this application by East Herts Council.

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting, 4 applications had been considered, 2 applications granted permission and 1 application refused. In addition, notification had been received today that permission had been refused for the Clay Chimneys House planning application.

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

21/13) Clerk's information

The Clerk reported on the following matters:

- the latest A120 bypass newsletter has been received and will be circulated after the meeting;

- a representative from the Herts Staged Rally will be at the March meeting to provide an update and hear any concerns that locals may have regarding the rally;
- the national census campaign is starting in February for the upcoming census on the 21st March which will be, primarily, digital. Two groups have been identified where it is envisaged that help will be needed: over 80 and over 65 with limited digital skills. Due to the current lockdown, the completion events that were planned can no longer be held and assistance with how to engage with these groups has been sought. Messages regarding the census will be included in the February "Pelhams" magazine and can now include reference to the mobile contact number referred to earlier (Minute ref: 21/7);
- the Stansted Airport Public Inquiry started on Tuesday and, as it is virtual, the sessions can be watched either live or subsequently; and [weblink: https://stream-uk.venue-av.com/e/sai/live_stream]
- Herts County Council is currently consulting on its Draft Herts Waste Local Plan. [weblink: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/waste-and-recycling/draft-waste-local-plan-2021.aspx#>]

21/14) Councillor updates

Cllr B Gale reported that the request for road signs was now with the correct person in Highways and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

21/15) Residents comments

None

21/16) Next meeting

Confirmed that the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held virtually on 4th March 2021 at 7pm.

The meeting ended at 8.21 pm.

APPENDIX A

Application number	Proposal	Action
<p><u>3/21/0036/FUL</u> & <u>3/21/0037/LBC</u></p>	<p>Conversion of barn to create 1, 5 bedroomed dwelling with associated parking and landscaping; demolition of outbuilding; external alterations to roof, insertion of 8 roof lights and alterations to fenestration; creation of steps to front and patio to rear; internal alterations to include removal and creation of walls and doors, kitchen and creation of bathrooms at first floor and insertion of new staircase at Chapel House Barn, Tinkers Hall Farm</p>	<p>Application considered</p>
<p><u>3/20/2323/HH</u></p>	<p>Construction of two-storey rear and single storey side extension; replacement front porch, conversion and alterations of garage and changes to fenestration at The Cottage, East End</p>	<p>Application considered</p>
<p><u>3/20/2310/HH</u></p>	<p>Removal of conservatory and replace with single storey side extension; construction of two storey rear extension and a single storey side extension; new first floor front window opening at Clay Chimneys House</p>	<p>Application considered Permission refused</p>
<p><u>3/20/2017/FUL</u></p>	<p>Demolition of existing buildings, erection of a replacement dwelling and outbuilding and new entrance driveway at Dingley Dell, The Street</p>	<p>Permission granted</p>
<p><u>3/20/1960/FUL</u></p>	<p>Reconsultation: Increase to pitch to the Nave Roof to accommodate natural slate, removal of lead on North aisle and replace with felt, removal of lead on South Aisle, replace with felt including repairs to gutter and the removal of lead to North elevation and replace with felt at St Mary's Church, The Street.</p>	<p>Permission refused</p>

Application number	Proposal	Action
<u>3/20/1853/FUL</u>	Proposals for 2 stables with hay and tack storage and menage at Land adjacent to Pheasant Hall, The Causeway	Permission granted