Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Farningham held at Shand Hall, High Street, Farningham on Wednesday 13th March 2024 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Daryl Burns (Chairman), Andie Fitzsimons, Philip McGarvey, Kevin McGeough, Carol Salmon, Krishna Shanmuganathan and Cllrs Laurence Ball and Alan White (SDC).

In attendance: 1 member of the public, and Helen Penney (Clerk).

1. Apologies and reasons for absence.
Apologies were received an accepted for Roger Gough (KCC).

2. Election of Vice Chair
None.

3. To fill the current vacancy via Co-option
None.

4. Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.
Cllr Shanmuganathan declared an interest in item 12.7.2 and recused himself from any discussion.

5. To consider, and approve if appropriate, which agenda items are sufficiently confidential as to warrant exclusion of members of the press and public under the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960
None.

6. Report from the County Councillor
Cllr Burns read the following report in Cllr Gough's absence:

My apologies once more for being unable to join you this evening; I am currently up in London and will not be back in time.

A couple of updates for this evening's meeting:

(1) Concerning the 20mph and the roundels, as set out in Nigel Rowe's email, I have checked and as I understand it the suggested new site for the roundel is still in front of the resident's home but not in front of their drive. To that extent (and it is not affecting another resident), it might seem to be OK. That said, there is I think something of a concern that we are setting a precedent; the resident's own curtilage is not affected by what is put out in the highway, and others could then say that they wished to have a particular view taken into account, so on balance best in my view to go with the original proposal. But I am open to other views and put this to the PC for your consideration.

(2) Regarding the A20, please see below an update from my Highways colleagues. I think it pretty much speaks for itself; the key point is perhaps that we could move ahead on average speed cameras for the 40mph zone. My reading of our pre-Christmas discussion

was not that the PC was hostile to this but was concerned to ensure that this did not squeeze out some other issues, such as ensuring sufficient warning on approaching the 40mph area. But I would be most interested to hear your views on this.

Colleagues from the Road Safety and Highway Improvement teams (HIT) met about the A20 Farningham in its entirety this week and discussed actions that come out of the meeting with the Parish Council, including the issues of right turns out of Eynsford Road and White Post Hill.

As you saw from the data sent on the 14th of February, right turns from these junctions are relatively low as proportion of traffic and there is little evidence of these maneuvers resulting in personal injury and damage only collisions. As such there are no plans to make changes based on right turns; and limited viable options to change the highway to force or prevent this banned right turn from being undertaken if a driver wishes to break the rules of the road. That said, the Safer Road User, Behavior Change team are considering additional messaging or campaign information that could be put out on social media locally to support the correct use of the highway in this location. This would need to be paid for targeted messaging and will not guarantee changes on the ground.

As an update on all actions from the meeting, these are going to include;

- The HIT looking at installing additional advance countdown signs to inform drivers of the upcoming 40mph speed limit gateway that is currently considered (by the PC) to provide insufficient warning of the speed limit change. We are considering the use of 'countdown marker signs' warning of a change ahead, these are not commonly used and will require DfT to approve a non-standard sign.
- The HIT will order some additional carriageway roundels advising of the 40mph speed limit.
- Additional targeted social media reminders about what national speed limit means on different sections of the road. There were claims that people are not aware what the speed limit is, but there are numerous NSL signs in place.
- Consideration given to layout and access/egress changes to the King's Roundabout Petrol Station (this may involve liaison with the owners, due to this being third party land).

The number of KSI casualties on the 40mph section, would still meet the criteria for installation of a system of average speed cameras, supported by the Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership, although at present the support does not appear to be there from the Parish. If from the meeting, there is a feeling that a system of average speed cameras would be supported by the Parish, then it would be good get this feedback. These would cost around £170k but are likely to ensure the 40mph speed limit is better complied with. We truly believe this will reduce the number and severity of collisions on this section of the A20.

Once a package of measures as set out above is designed, we are going to commission a Safety Audit of the route (at present without the speed cameras) to see if any further mitigating engineering actions could be considered that have not been thought about above.

Members discussed the report and resolved:

- To follow guidance from KCC Highways on howe best to implement the 20mph scheme to ensure it is delivered in accordance with their regulations. **Action: Clerk.**

- To confirm that there is no objection from the Parish Council for average speed cameras to be considered as part of the A20 safety improvements. However, Members would like to know who will pay for them, how many cameras are expected and the location/s. **Action: Clerk.**

7. Report from the District Councillors
Cllr Ball reported that SDC are struggling financially and the budget for Citizens Advice has recently been cut by £35,000 per year for the next three years. However, SDC have since been successful with a recent grant application that will see Citizens Advice receive £40,000 this year.

Cllr Ball reported that from 1st April 2024 SDC will no longer supply black general waste sacks to residents and that in the Autumn the clear recycling sacks will be replaced with a Bag for Life and supplied to households for which, more details will be provided nearer the time.

Cllr Ball confirmed that since the last meeting he had sent the timeline for the Local Plan to the Clerk and that the next important date at SDC is the 26th March 2024 when the Development and Conservation Advisory Committee are meeting to be presented with a summary of the Regulation 18 Consultation. Cllr McGeough commented that the timeline is out of date as some dates have been missed and asked Cllr Ball to provide an up-to-date version. **Action: Cllr Ball.**

Cllr White reported that following discussions around solar farm applications in the area, his colleague, Cllr Michael Horwood, has advised that according to the National Planning Policy Framework land used for renewable and low carbon schemes can be extended for longer than 30 years, which is the timescale these applications tend to work with and should be noted when responding to planning applications. Cllr McGeough added that paragraph 156 of the NPPF should also be considered as 'When located in the Greenbelt, elements of mainly renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstance of project need to proceed'.

8. A Public Open Session. Members of the public will be welcome to address the Parish Council with any local concerns they have. Please note this item will be limited in time at the discretion of the Chairman.
One member of the public attending the meeting with a primary interest in the Local Plan and to also observe proceedings. The member of the public complained that there is significant light pollution coming from the driving range at Pedham Place that will be affecting the habitat for bats and the Skylarks and their nesting season. Members Advised that the Environment Agency, CPRE, RSPB, National Landscapes and Kent Wildlife Trust can all be contacted. Cllrs Ball and White agreed to discuss with the enforcement team at SDC.

Action: Cllr Ball and White.

Members asked the Clerk to make Cllr Gough aware as light pollution was one of the driving factors when street lights were removed in the area. **Action: Clerk.**

9. Approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Parish Council meetings on 14th February 2024.
The Minutes from the Parish Council meeting on the 14th February 2024 were approved and signed.

10. Trident
Cllr Salmon. **Action: Cllr Salmon.**

11. Clerks report
The Clerk reported:

- She had met with the internal auditor in February and that the end of year audit should take place in May 2024.

- A resident at Lion Cottages is unhappy with the speed and service from KCC regarding regular flooding at their property. The KCC Drainage team have advised that they are working on solutions to help mitigate the situation but it will take some time and that the resident should contact the National Flood Forum again and if still unhappy escalate to the ombudsman.

- DHA Planning who has been involved with planning applications at Maplescombe Farm have contacted neighbours of the site to try and arrange a meeting before submitting a new application.

- There is still only one quote to repair/protect/replace the bridge tablets. Cllr McGeough advised that he would forward contact details of some companies to contact for more quotes otherwise, Members agreed to concentrate on the two road side tablets as the tablet over the river is making the project unfeasible. **Action: Cllr McGeough and the Clerk.**

- The next Patient Participation Group meeting with Braeside and Devon Road Surgeries has been scheduled for 21st May 2024, 5-6.30pm at Devon Road, after the surgeries have merged on 1st April. Cllrs Burns, Fitzsimons and White hope to attend.

- SDC have confirmed that they will extend the broken fence at the entrance to Till Avenue to prevent inconsiderate parking.

- A Family Fun Day slot has been booked with SDC for Wednesday 21st August 2024. The Clerk has contacted the village hall to book the hall and Market Meadow. The Parish Council should provide a stall for refreshments during the event which will need further consideration and may mean help from Councillors is needed on the day. **Action: Clerk.**

12. Planning

12.1 Planning log circulated by the Clerk on 8th March 2024.

Member notes the log.

12.2 Enforcement requests with SDC.

Members noted the log.

12.3 Sevenoaks District Council Local Plan 2040.

Members have already noted that the next important date is Tuesday 26th March 2024. Members also discussed a Neighbourhood Plan for Farningham and asked the Clerk to investigate further. Cllr McGeough advised that he could support. **Action: Cllr McGeough and the Clerk.**

12.4 To receive a report from Cllr McGeough on BeesnotWasps/Protect our Greenbelt Together.

Cllr McGeough reported that the group will be known as 'No Pedham New Town' as well as using the tag 'Protect our Greenbelt Together'.

Cllr McGeough reported that the group needs administrative support, that they will be working on getting their terms of reference in place and are taking a very keen interest in the SDC meeting scheduled for the 26th March 2024. Cllr McGough added that if the local plan gets to Regulation 19, they will be seeking support of a planning consultant and fees could be between £10,000 to £20,000.

Cllr McGeough reported that after analysing comments submitted for Regulation 18 there are many damning responses from key stakeholders.

12.5 Planning Applications. To consider any planning applications and to include any received by the Clerk after the agenda has been served to Councillors.

Reference: 24/00264/FUL

Site: Catahoula Fields Eglantine Lane Farningham Kent DA4 9JL

Proposal: Change of use and temporary (period of 2 years from October 2023) part covered external storage facility with hardstanding for vehicular access and two containers.

Comments by: 20th March 2024

Object

Parish Council strongly objects to this retrospective planning application. The development has already happened illegally without planning permission.

The scale of the development is enormous which harms the openness of the Green Belt. The development is clearly visible from far distances including, the National Landscape, historical woodland and an SSSI. The development is inappropriate with no very special circumstances.

The level of detail submitted in the application is insufficient. There are no proposals to reduce the scale of the development or improve the poor quality of the materials being used.

Lighting has not been included and will have a detrimental impact on the Green Belt, wildlife and visible impact of the site if not taken into careful consideration.

If this application were to be approved, it would set a precedent for more illegal developments on site.

The temporary status of the application is very concerning. The applicant has not included how the site will be returned to its original state once the two years has expired.

Eglantine Lane is a narrow country road with very few passing places, and cannot sustain large commercial vehicles regularly travelling back and forth to the site.

12.6 Planning applications responded to under delegated powers.
Reference: 24/00239/HOUSE
Site: Tamarisk 28 Beesfield Lane Farningham Kent DA4 0BZ
Development: Single story rear and first floor side extensions, new front porch and new rear outbuilding to replace existing garage/carport.

Comments by: 12th March 2024

No comment

12.7 Planning applications for noting but not for comment.
12.7.1 Reference: 24/00192/LDCPR
Proposal: Solar panels on the roof.
Site: 26 Beesfield Lane Farningham Kent DA4 0BZ

Members noted the application.

12.7.2 Reference: 24/00244/WTCA
Site: The Manor House High Street Farningham Kent DA4 0DG
Development: Various works to trees.

Members noted the application.

13. Finance Items for noting and decision
13.1 To approve items payable and note items paid and receipts.
Members approved the items payable and for the Clerk to include the grant for £300 to The Space agreed at last month's meeting. **Action: The Clerk.**

13.2 Flexed budget February 2024.
Members noted the report.

13.3 Approval of transfer of funds into reserves accounts for 2023/24.
Members agreed for the budgeted amounts to be transferred into the reserve accounts.

Action: Clerk.

13.4 Reconciliation of Clerks salary 2023/24.
Members noted the reconciliation and that March payment would correct the difference.

13.5 To note the application and grant from the Parish Council Winter Support Scheme.
Members noted the successful grant application and that once received, the £1,000 would be transferred to The Space. **Action: Clerk.**

13.6 To note the recent Fly tipping incident at Farningham Woods and to discuss and agree if any further action is required.
Members noted the incident and that the quote from SDC to collect and dispose of the out-of-date PPE was £550+VAT and was paid during the month. Members asked the Clerk to investigate reinstating the height barrier at the entrance to the car park and to include a new sign at the entrance to Calfstock Lane to warn drivers of the dead-end. **Action: Clerk.**

14. Highways including
14.1 To discuss and agree next steps from the results of informal consultation on parking restrictions, High Street.
Members resolved to not pursue the removal of the parking restriction any further due to a low response rate and no clear preference from the residents that did respond. Members asked the Clerk to contact residents who had responded to thank them for their time. **Action: Clerk.**

14.2 To discuss and agree next steps to extend the double yellow lines along the High Street.
Members asked the Clerk to try and determine total costs and to contact the bus company to establish how much of a problem poorly parked cars causes their drivers. **Action: Clerk.**

15. Annual Parish Meeting – 20th March 2024 8pm, Village Hall
Members noted the meeting. Cllr Ball gave his apologies.

16. To note the annual review of Parish Council documentation. Amendments to be requested at April's meeting and policies updated and adopted at May's meeting.
Members noted that the policies were due the annual review and asked the Clerk to circulate via email. **Action Clerk.**

Cllr McGarvey advised that the Kent Resilience Forum and KALC want to support Parish Councils develop an emergency plan. Cllr McGarvey will bring more information to future meetings for further discussion. **Action: Cllr McGarvey.**

17. Friends of Farningham
Cllr Salmon advised that the new season will start on Saturday 6th April 2024.

18. To discuss and agree upon a spring/summer newsletter.
Members agreed to distribute a spring/summer newsletter.

Cllr Burns advised that the Village Hall is not currently planning a Christmas Market. Members asked the Clerk to try and book the hall for a mulled wine and carols event once the Christmas tree has been installed. **Action: Clerk.**

19. Urgent Business that occurs and requires attention before the next meeting may be reported at the Chairman's discretion.

Cllr McGarvey advised that Eynsfara were hosting an auction in Eynsford Village Hall that weekend to help raise money for the new Eynsford Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 20:47.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 10th April 2024.

Items Paid

PAYMENTS LIST

Vouch	Date	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT Type	VAT	Total
160	14/02/2024	Bank charges - CA	Handelsbanken	11.00	X		11.00
168	14/02/2024	Bank charges - DA	Handelsbanken	1.18	X		1.18
163	15/02/2024	Pension contribution	Nest Pensions	97.53	X		97.53
164	15/02/2024	Electricity supply	npower	412.75	L	20.64	433.39
142	22/02/2024	Payroll services	DM Payroll Services	90.00	X		90.00
159	22/02/2024	Acrobat	Miss H Penney	16.64	S	3.33	19.97
157	22/02/2024	Amenity Area Maintenance	Lothlorien Landscapes	125.00	S	25.00	150.00
158	22/02/2024	Notice Board	Lothlorien Landscapes	90.00	S	18.00	108.00
156	22/02/2024	Office stationery	Miss H Penney	15.67	S	3.14	18.81
166	22/02/2024	Printing	Miss H Penney	5.00	X		5.00
165	22/02/2024	Telephone & Broadband	Miss H Penney	4.12	S	0.83	4.95
155	22/02/2024	Christmas	Lothlorien Landscapes	770.00	S	154.00	924.00
161	23/02/2024	Clerk's salary	Miss H Penney	1,073.85	X		1,073.85
			Total	**2,712.74**		**224.94**	**2,937.68**

Receipts

RECEIPTS LIST

Vouch	Code	Date	Bank	Description	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
25	Anonymous Donation	15/02/2024	FPC Current Account (HB)	Anonymous Donation	X	149.50		149.50
26	Bank Interest	29/02/2024	FPC Deposit (HB)	Bank Interest	X	13.05		13.05
			Total			**162.55**		**162.55**

Items Payable

PAYMENTS (AWAITING AUTHORISATION) LIST

Vouch	Date	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
167	05/03/2024	Fly Tipping	Sevenoaks District Council	S	550.00	110.00	660.00
178	08/03/2024	Farningham Woods	Sevenoaks District Council	S	1,400.00	280.00	1,680.00
171	13/03/2024	Clerk's salary	Miss H Penney	X	1,071.05		1,071.05
174	19/03/2024	Electricity supply	npower	L	353.32	17.67	370.99
170	13/03/2024	Bank charges	Handelsbanken	X			
173	13/03/2024	Pension contribution	Nest Pensions	X	97.53		97.53
179	13/03/2024	Election expenses	Sevenoaks District Council	X	155.55		155.55
176	13/03/2024	Printing	Miss H Penney	X	5.00		5.00
175	13/03/2024	Telephone & Broadband	Miss H Penney	S	4.12	0.83	4.95
169	13/03/2024	Acrobat	Miss H Penney	S	16.64	3.33	19.97
117	13/03/2024	Leaf Blower	Miss H Penney	X	274.17	54.83	329.00
							358.92
			Total		**3,927.38**	**466.66**	**4,394.04**

Plus £300 to the Space