

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AS HELD ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 12th 2024 AT 7.30PM AT THE PAVILION, FRIENDLESS LANE

Number: 10/2023

Present: Cllrs Tim Parsons, Jane Timmis, Nancy Wild, Billy Pither, John Williams, Natalie Crowie, Jonathan Humbert, Stephen Behr

Also present: Caroline Freer – Clerk; County Cllr Terry Douris

- 1. To receive and approve apologies:** Cllr Boothman and Humphreys (away);
- 2. To receive declarations of interest on agenda items: No**
- 3. To resolve that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of the previous meeting on 8th January 2024 are a correct record.**

Proposed by: Cllr Parsons

Seconded by: Cllr Timmis

It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th Jan 2024 having previously been circulated as a true and accurate record of the proceedings be duly signed by the Chairman. All agreed

- 4. Public and press participation (15 minutes maximum):**

Louise and Mark Russell – have the land in Friendless Lane which is a planning item.

Police Constable Jon Onyon attended the meeting following repeated requests for some vestige of Police presence and he was welcomed to the meeting.

Update from PC Onyon:

Generally, more of the crimes/violence are related to the petrol station and the hotels on the A5138, so whilst the Police may not be seen in Flamstead itself, they are often attending incidents at the above premises.

The use of drones has been successful in St Albans where off road vehicles are causing a nuisance in various fields. Cllr Timmis mentioned the off road vehicles which plague Babes Wood and other areas close to Flamstead. There is a rural support team but it is based out of WGC.

His visit was much appreciated.

- 5. County Cllr Terry Douris to update the meeting:** Rain has caused flooding so verges are being eroded, laybys are forming which leads to the collapse of hedgerows. Trowley Bottom is on a 3 monthly drain cleaning rota. Terry recommends that all pot holes are reported on the HCC website via this link: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/report-a-problem/report-a-street-light-or-pothole.aspx>

Lynx service – is going really well in some DBC areas (less so in Flamstead and Markyate) and should be considered for short journeys.

Additional bus service no 46 has been introduced so check out the timetable on the website.

Wigwag by school: (when orange lights flash 20mph) The possible installation of a “Wigwag” (a 20 mph flashing sign) around the school is being considered. There is a Speed Indicator Device (SID) set at 20 mph for downhill traffic, but there is nothing to remind drivers who are coming up the hill.

Action: Terry Douris to get a price for it.

HCC’s budget is being set on 13 Feb, which includes education and schools. Adult and child care services consume a huge part of the budget.

There is a 30 mph sign down on Hollybush Lane – it was asked - how long should they take to fix it? Cllr Timmis suggested using What Three Words for pot hole location.

Claire Scott asked about the 7.5 tonne weight limit progress as large lorries are continuing to come through the village, waking up residents in the middle of the night and causing damage to vehicles. Recently, an HGV was stuck on Friendless Lane/Pietley Hill – this gives unnecessary work for the Police. Terry said funding has been applied for in the 24/25 year. It is a slow process unfortunately. Claire asked who pays for the damage done by the vehicles. It is important to keep log of all incidents and pass these on to Highways via Terry Douris as it will add credence to the matter. Claire requested having a schedule on the weight limit regularly – and with Chequers Hill egress/works.

Commercial sat navs – need to be addressed as when the archaic Traffic Order was introduced in 1984 it gives the suggested route through Flamstead so as to avoid the M1.

6. Planning:

i) To consider new Applications:

1	24/00107/FHA:16 Trowley Hill Road	Proposed external and internal alterations	No objections to this application. It was noted that the expert Heritage planning officer would pick up any issues related to the listed building status of the dwelling should there be any.
2	24/00089/LDE: Valley Farm, Valley Lane	Certificate of Lawfulness relating to use of premises	No objections
3	24/00059/FUL Stables and outbuildings on Friendless Lane	Demolition of stables and storage buildings and construction of one new dwelling	Whilst it was not a unanimous vote, there was a majority vote to raise no objection to the application. Concerns were voiced regarding the gradual creep of housing into the Green Belt /AONB and the access route being used as a public footpath as well for the vehicular use which would need to be addressed.
4	24/00213/LBC	Car Port	The PC objected to this application as the proposal appears to be an incongruous building situated in an inappropriate location in the garden of a listed property. The application states that it is a car port, but there is no access to it for cars but it will be used for garden furniture/lawn mowers etc. It was felt this was far too large a construction and would be out of keeping in this listed setting. Object

ii) Planning applications received in last 6 days

1			
2			

iii) Planning Decisions taken by DBC

1	Pepsal End Farm	Granted
2	Watling House	Granted

3	2 Woodend Cott	Granted
4	6 Trowley Hill Rd	Refused: Insufficient information has been provided in support of the application such that the Local Planning Authority cannot be satisfied that the proposed replacement windows would not detract from the character, appearance or design of the Listed Building.
5	Doone Brae	Various conditions granted
6	Grove Farm	<p>Refusal: 1. The proposed development of the site, located within the Rural Area, to provide one residential unit is not acceptable in principle and conflicts with Core Strategy (2013) Policies CS1 and CS7 and paragraphs 82, 83 and 84 (c) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) 2. The proposed development, by virtue of its design, would have a detrimental impact on the Chilterns AONB and would not protect the character and appearance of the countryside.</p> <p>The proposed location of the dwelling would result in inadequate access and servicing. The refuse and recycling collection point would be located more than 25m from the dwelling and its refuse and recycling storage area.</p> <p>The application does not provide sufficient information to satisfy the council, as the competent authority, that the proposed development will not adversely affect the integrity of the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area for Conservation. There are no alternative solutions/mitigation or credible imperative reasons of overriding public interest why the proposed development should be permitted. In the absence of such information, and in the absence of an appropriate legal agreement to mitigate such adverse impact, the proposed development is contrary to Policy CS26 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy (2013)</p> <p>The Council has not acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant as in the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue</p>

7. Working Groups: Pavilion/Rec: Consider perimeter trim trail at recreation ground (possibly via Mayor's funding) – insufficient funds available; Westenders confirm move to Markyate – they will finish playing in Flamstead April/May.
8. Cricket Club (FCC) Update and agree to terms for 2024 season: Nick Ross and Sach attended the meeting. Nick outlined the wishes of the cricket club and would like to renegotiate Ts and Cs to work in partnership with the PC, considering how best to use the ground for the community. There will be training for 7-10 year olds on Fri and Sat with the training sessions via the All Stars Project on Saturdays.
- Costs to FCC are high - £6000 for groundsmen alone and investment in the pitch has now created a good quality wicket.
- FCC want to pay £1000 for the year (reduced from £2500) so the shortfall will have to be supported from the PC's reserves.
- FCC will only use the pitch on 4 Sundays so the pavilion/rec can be used for other events/parties etc.
- FCC can't increase the subs any more as they will become uncompetitive
- For 2025 – looking at no more than 10% rise year on year – although this was not agreed to. The subs are £150 and there will be 18 games and some friendlies.
- Although there has been a request from another club to use the pitch on a Sunday, it will be hard to control where the responsibilities lie, so, whilst it would increase income, it is not viable at the moment.
- It was asked – how many of the members live in Flamstead - 10% of the members live locally, 90% live elsewhere. This is relevant where the recreation ground and pavilion is funded via the Precept ie the Parish Council Tax which all residents pay.
- Teas are not required any more as people prefer to bring their own – this makes it easier in terms of meeting dietary and cultural preferences.

Cllr Humbert suggested that if the PC should take a hit for the loss of income, then FCC should pay a bit more. There was a vote for £1250 and £1000. The lower figure received more votes.

Cllr Parsons proposed that the fee for FCC is decreased from £2500 to £1000.

Seconded by Cllr Pither

- 9. Update from Friends of Flamstead School;** request for funding: Christy Lee made a request for funding to help with the replacement of the school pool which is in dire need of renovating. The plan is to drastically improve the area by the entrance to the school and create a learning area with wildlife, planting, seating etc to provide a environmentally sensitive area for enjoyment and outdoor learning.

In general, the school, with its new Head Teacher is gaining numbers, there are works in progress on the school roof – hence the scaffolding. Changes are being made to the interior of the school – new teaching areas, shelving, carpets etc.

A fully ecological pond was costed at £6,000, and a lower quote was received to replace the pond for £1700 with considerable parental input.

Christy requested £1000 from the PC.

Following discussions, it was felt that as the PC had contributed to school events recently, that the PC would match fund any monies received from a grant/school fund raising to a maximum of £850. The Clerk suggested contacting DBC Environmental department and would send other information. Cllr Timmis to enquire at DBC re funding.

Proposed: Cllr Pither

Seconded Cllr Parsons

All agreed

- 10. Update from Nigel Tully:** Flamstead Preschool: Over Xmas holiday it was decided to stop offering after school hours as it was just not viable. The 3 probationers taken on to do the after school care were given 4 weeks' notice as per their contracts. The numbers are good and there are many children taking advantage of the HCC funded places, although this is at a lower rate than the regular charges. The staff have volunteered to give up 2 paid hours per week to help balance the books – which is extraordinarily kind of them. The village hall has also kindly reduced the rent from January to March 2024.

Plans for the future: there was a promising meeting with the village school re holiday and after school clubs in September using the school premises.

- 11. Traffic Calming Suggestion on Trowley Hill Rd** by the school in Flamstead – as discussed above
- 12. Funding ideas:** Insufficient for the plans for a trim trail around the outer rim of the rec. Consider researching for grants for outside gym equipment. Cllr Timmis explained about the green spaces DBC is encouraging developers to create around housing estates – to take pressure off places like Ashridge.
- 13. Warden:** clear inside of hedge – by tennis court.
- 14. Finance:** To consider receipts and payments reports from 9th January to 12th February 2024 as circulated - To authorise payments as itemised; to consider expenditure against budget report and to sign off invoices against payment report, bank reconciliations and bank statements to month end @ 31 January 2024. To agree to payments by BACS as per report presented.

Proposed by: Cllr Parsons

Seconded by: Cllr Crowie

All agreed

- 15. Correspondence**

- 16. Agreed Action/By Whom**

	Actions from Nov meeting	
JW/CF	and 2 x cupboards 2 signs Home and Away for cricket teams Await Honours boards to put up	
	Planning Enforcement matters	
JT	Request updates on Enforcement Orders for: Shipping container in field on Abilea Meadows, Friendless Lane Barn on Cotton Spring Gates/barn – not enforced inappropriate gate for a wood yard. Stable at Wood End Farm – refused and has not been removed Newlands Wood – have been spoken to as they are selling parcels of woods for camping, encouraging camp fires – dangerous in woods etc. As they sell more plots they are being visited – drive in and park on road which is hazardous Chalkdell Cottages – container in field and other earth works	On-going Appeal has been lodged Semi hard core road to be challenged Ret planning app submitted Appeal lodged for stables Planning Enforcement – on it

Cllr Tim Parsons
Chairman
19 March 2024