

Fontmell Magna Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday 14th January 2019 at St Andrews Primary School, Fontmell Magna at 7.00pm

Present: Cllr H Horstead (Chairman), Cllrs. C Bellers, M Humphreys, L Williams, and A Newbury

In attendance: Cllr. Graham Carr-Jones – County Councillor, M Wheatley – Clerk, and 16 members of the public.

Public Questions:

A resident commented that Melbury Abbas seemed to be getting a lot of press coverage lately and he asked the Parish Council to confirm that the Parish Council would be carrying on the excellent work undertaken by Robin East. The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council would continue to carry on with the work and Cllr. Humphreys confirmed that Cllr. Long had agreed to continue to represent the Parish on the A350 Community Group and at the Parish level.

There were no other topics raised.

- 14/01/01 Apologies for Absence.** There was an apology for absence from Cllr. Langham – District Councillor and Cllr. Long.
- 14/01/02 Declarations of Interest.** Cllr. Williams declared a non-percuniary interest in the Village Hall.
- 14/01/03 Resignation, Co-option and Councillors roles.** The Chairman confirmed that Hannah Lister had resigned from the Council and he thanked her for her work as a Councillor and wished her well in the future. She had been included on the Agenda as the Agenda had been issued before the effective date of her resignation. The Clerk confirmed that she had put up the Notices advertising the vacancy on the Notice Boards. She also confirmed that the usual Notice asking inviting a call for an election was not appropriate as there was going to be an election in May. If anyone wanted to join the Parish Council they could be co-opted straightaway without waiting for the usual period of time. Cllr. Humphreys suggested that the Parish Council should send out a message asking for volunteers to join the Parish Council. Cllr. Bellers confirmed he had asked the Councillors to confirm what responsibilities they would be willing to take on. He had not received a response from everyone but had circulated a list. The Clerk asked who would be taking on tree work applications. It was confirmed that Cllr. Long would look at these applications. It was also confirmed that Cllr. Humphreys would put up notices on the Bedchester Noticeboard. Cllrs. Bellers and Long had also volunteered to put up notices and the Clerk would sort out which one was going to put up the notices on the Fontmell Magna notice board.
- 14/01/04 Minutes of the Meeting on 12th November 2018.** The Chairman confirmed that the meeting had started at 7.30pm and subject to this amendment the minutes were then approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.
- 14/01/05 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting.** Cllr. Bellers proposed that the £50 received from the Best Kept Village awards should be used for any maintenance of the War Memorial. This was agreed.
- 14/01/06 County Councillor and District Councillor's reports.** Cllr. Carr-Jones confirmed that there was not a great deal to report. Business was carrying on as usual however the main focus was on the formation of the Unitary Authority. Bi-weekly reports on the progress towards the Unitary Authority were being sent out. The Senior Leadership Team had been put into place. Cllr. Carr-Jones then introduced Cllr. Jane Somper who was one of the candidates who would be standing

in the Beacon ward. The Chairman confirmed that any other candidates were welcome to come along to the March meeting. Cllr. Somper confirmed that she was currently a Councillor in a different ward and she had been a Councillor for that ward for 8 years. She lived in Sutton Waldron and would be happy to answer any queries that the residents might have.

The Clerk confirmed that a report from the District Councillor had been circulated. There was nothing arising from this report. Cllr. Humphreys asked the County Councillor whether there was any clarity as to what structure was going to sit between the Unitary Authority and the Parish Council. The County Councillor confirmed that the main conduit would be the Unitary Authority Councillor. There had been some discussion about setting up area boards but any boards would not be given a budget and therefore would have limited decision making powers. Ultimately it would be a matter for the new Unitary Authority. Cllr. Humphreys then asked about the funds which NDDC had recently distributed to various villages. The County Councillor confirmed that the distribution of the funds was not an open book process but the funds had been distributed to legacy projects which had been on-going for sometime with a view to ensuring those projects had funds. For example funding for the Trailway had just been approved by the Cabinet. He did however understand why it might look like some villages had missed out.

14/01/07 To consider Development Control Matters.

a. Applications/other matters considered since the last meeting as per the Schedule. The Clerk confirmed the matters that had been reviewed by the Parish Council since the last meeting. The matters considered were as per the schedule prepared for the meeting. The Parish Council had had no objection to the following applications:

- Land at Gore Farm (x2) – form base yard and form roof over existing cattle yard area.
- Little Hartgrove – erect first floor and single storey extensions.
- Bedchester House – erect single storey timber conservatory – planning and listed building consent.
- Croft Farm House – change of use

The Parish Council had objected to the application by 21 Lurmer St to remove and replace 4 windows. There appears to have been some confusion as to the materials to be used but in any event the Parish Council had objected to the style. The Parish Council had also had no objection to the Planning Application submitted by 3 Marshlands.

b. Applications to be considered as per the Schedule – The Parish Council were also aware of two applications where they were not being formally consulted:

- St. Andrews Farm Barn Woodbridge Land – change of use to two dwellings. This was a permitted development and therefore the Parish Council were not being formally consulted.
- Charlie's Cottage – tree works whilst the Parish Council were not being formally consulted on this application they would consider the same.

c. Update on developments Mill St. & South St – The Clerk confirmed that she had asked the District Councillor to find out what was happening and had seen that the District Councillor had emailed the Planning Officer. To date she had not received a reply. The County Councillor confirmed that the decisions would be made before the District Council was dissolved in May. There would be a small hiatus following the May elections but the intention was to deal with any current applications before May.

d. Formation of Planning Working Group (“PWG”) – The Clerk asked for clarification as to who was going to be visiting the Applicants, speaking to any agents and speaking to the neighbours. Cllr. Bellers confirmed that when drafting the terms of reference for the PWG he had taken into account the concerns raised by the Parish Council that it was going to be side lined and accordingly had assumed that the PWG would draft its report based on the on-line information and that the Parish Council would continue to visit the properties and speak with the Applicants and the Neighbours. The Chairman confirmed that in any report the PWG should indicate who had undertaken what task. The Parish Council would still have overall control. Cllr. Williams confirmed he did not think it was appropriate for the PWG to take on any planning role and thought that effectively what would happen was that the Parish

Council would be rubber stamping the decision of the PWG. It was suggested that the two Councillors who were on the PWG should undertake any visits. It was however confirmed that the two Councillors were not keen to do this. Cllr. Humphreys suggested that if the Parish Council was happy to delegate some of the planning functions to the PWG it should trust them to report back appropriately and it should pass the whole of the function to the PWG. Any report would confirm who had done what. It was proposed that the PWG should be asked to look at any application in its entirety and to report back to the Parish Council appropriately. This proposal was agreed with 3 Councillors voting for the proposal, 1 against and 1 abstaining.

- e. **Responses to Applications** – The Clerk confirmed she had been looking at what response the Parish Council should be giving to any Planning Application. The Head of Planning had recently written to the Clerks asking for the Parish Councils to indicate whether they objected or supported any application with reasons. What however was required was a substantive response which included saying that the Parish Council had no comment. The Clerk considered that this was consistent with the Parish Council saying it had no objection and if the Parish Council had no comment/no objection it was difficult to give reasons. She had also noted that other Parish Councils continued to say they had no objection and indeed she had recently seen this response from Highways to an application. It was agreed that the Clerk would submit responses based on the Parish Council's comments following the PWG's report.

14/01/08 Update on the Neighbourhood Plan - Cllr. Humphreys confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan had been approved following the referendum in November 2018. 272 people had voted with 249 voting for the Plan and 23 voting against it. The NDDC Cabinet had met on 28th November and had unanimously voted for the Neighbourhood Plan to form part of the Local Plan. The overall cost had been £16,778.00 net of VAT; £15334.00 had come from Locality grants, the cost to the Parish Council was £1429.00 and there had been a donation of £15.00.

14/01/09 To consider report from the RFO including draft budget – The Clerk confirmed that the latest financial reports had been circulated to the Parish Council and that the balance as at 31st December 2018 was £10,605.52. The Clerk had also circulated a draft precept plan. She confirmed that the anticipated balance as at 31st March 2019 was going to be in the region of £8000.00. With regard to the budget for next year if the precept was £8500.00 then the anticipated balance as at 31st March 2020 would be in the region of £8000.00. If however the Precept was £8500.00 and the grants requested by the Village Hall were granted this would reduce the balance for next year to approximately £6000.00. The amount of the Precept therefore needed to be considered in the context of the grant requests. The Chairman confirmed that the Council Tax was likely to be increased as a result of the formation of the Unitary Authority and by £24.00 per household as a contribution to the Police force. The Clerk confirmed that harmonisation of Council Tax across the region was apparently going to happen as soon as the Unitary Authority was operational. Cllr. Humphreys confirmed that he was happy with the suggested Council Tax of £8500.00 but was concerned to raise this any further. The request for grants by the Village Hall could mean that the reserves were reduced down to £6000.00 which could be a cause for concern. It was confirmed that the Village Hall was asking for £500.00 towards running costs and £1500.00 for the replacement of equipment. Nobody from the Village Hall was present to speak about the grants. The Treasurer of the Village Hall who was present had not been involved in the discussions regarding the grant request. The Chairman wanted to ensure that the Village Hall Trustees were aware of the Scheme of Work set up by the Charity Commission and their obligations under that scheme. Cllr. Williams the non-voting President of the Village Hall confirmed he had not attended the last meeting of the Village Hall committee. He went on to say that the play area did not contribute to the income of the Village Hall. The Village Hall had put its charges up last year and now covered its own costs. The insurance for the play area was quite expensive. If the Village Hall was going to have to pay for the play area it would have to put up its rates again. It was agreed that if the annual running costs of the play area were going to be met by the Parish Council they would have to form part of the Precept. It was explained that the Village Hall had some years ago taken on the play area as it owned the land and that the Parish Council had passed over the responsibility for the play equipment with a lump sum to be used for maintenance. The question was now whether the play area should be funded by the Village Hall or be met out of the Precept. It was confirmed that the Village Hall had more

funds in reserve than the Parish Council however the Treasurer confirmed that the amount of the reserves was in accordance with the Charity Commission requirements. It was confirmed that the Parish Council would provide for the sum of £500.00 in its budget for 2019/20 for the running costs. The Clerk confirmed there were various contingency payments within the grant mainly relating to the cost of obtaining any planning advice required next year. There was also a general contingency of £500.00. It was agreed that the Parish Council would ask for a Precept of £8500.00. The clerk confirmed she would change the Precept Plan to show the planning costs separately.

14/01/010 To resolve to pay Bills presented. The Clerk had circulated a schedule showing the invoices and standing orders which had been paid since the last meeting. The Parish Council agreed to repay the grant to Groundwork UK in the sum of £883.18.

14/01/011 Other Parish Matters

- a. **Highways including update on A350/C13** – in Cllr. Long’s absence there was nothing to report.
- b. **Village Hall request for grant** – The request for a grant of £500.00 had been discussed as part of the budget discussions. The other request was for £1500.00 towards replacement costs. The Treasurer of the Village Hall confirmed that the plan was to replace the equipment a piece at a time. The £1500.00 would go towards the cost of resurfacing the play area. Cllr. Bellers asked for clarification as to why this amount was being sought given that the cost was £2001.00 and £1800.00 had already been raised towards this cost. The Treasurer of the Village Hall confirmed he would ask the Village Hall to provide more details in time for the March meeting.
- c. **Defibrillator** – Cllr. Humphreys confirmed that 20 people had attended the recent training session and the cabinet was due to go live the next day when the ambulance service would be notified of its location. Once the ambulance service were aware of the location as and when someone dialled 999 provided they were within 200m of a cabinet they would be informed of its location. Cllr. Newbury had agreed to be the guardian of the defibrillator and would provide monthly reports to the ambulance service confirming the defibrillator was operational. Farnfields solicitors would be sponsoring the defibrillator for 4 years but after that the running costs might need to be funded by the Parish Council.
- d. **War Memorial** – The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council had been asked to repair one of the names on the War Memorial and she was waiting for the quote from the individual’s stone mason.
- e. **Village Shop** – Cllrs. Bellers and Humphreys together with a couple of other residents had been asked to attend a meeting with the owners of the shop. The shop lease was coming up for sale and the current owners did not think they could continue to run the shop as the residents of the village did not use the shop enough to cover the costs of running it. One of the residents had carried out some research into how the community could take on the shop. The District Council could ask for the shop to be classified as an asset of Community Value. This would place a six week embargo on any sale for members of the Community to come forward to take on the shop. If such a group came forward there would then be a further embargo of 6 months in order for the group to finalise its plans. It was however made clear at the meeting before Christmas that no-one was at this stage going to come forward to secure the asset. Cllr. Humphreys was merely informing the Parish Council of the current situation. A resident commented that in the questionnaire that had been sent out as part of the work for the Neighbourhood Plan the Village had said the shop was highly rated but obviously despite this the villagers were not using it enough.
- f. **Grit Bins** Cllr. Newbury and the Clerk confirmed they had been looking into the refilling of the Grit Bin at the entrance to St. Andrew’s View. It was not clear whether Highways filled this once a year and the Clerk was looking to clarify this. The bin was however a community bin and accordingly Highways were now saying that any re-filling of the bin had to be done through the Parish Council. Cllr. Newbury confirmed that in the past the Parish Council had decided that they would not meet the cost of filling/refilling this bin or any of the other bins in St. Andrew’s View. It was agreed that Cllr. Newbury should put a notice in the Gossip Tree asking residents for their views as to whether any other Grit Bins were required.

14/01/012 Other Matters arising from Correspondence. There were no matters arising from any correspondence.

14/01/013 Dates of Next Meeting – The next meeting will be 11th March 2019 at 7.00pm.

14/01/014 A.O.B.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.42 pm.

Date

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Chairman, Fontmell Magna Parish Council