



FERNHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday 12 February 2020

Minutes of the **Parish Council Meeting** held at Fernhurst Village Hall on
Wednesday 12 February 2020 at 6.45pm

Councillors Present:, Mrs H Bicknell, (Chairman), Mr W Black, Mrs S Bloomfield,
Mr G Inns, Mrs M Jenkins, Mr C Lloyd, Mrs C Thorne, Mrs M Timms, Mr G Williamson.

In Attendance: County Councillor David Bradford, District Councillor Peter Wilding,
K Jones (Clerk).

16/20 Apologies For Absence: Mr J Buchanan, Mr J Smith.

17/20 Declarations of Interests: None.

18/20 Public Representations: Mr Philip Dixon, (Secretary) and Mr Don Vowels
(Chairman) briefed the council on the historical and current state of affairs with the
Fernhurst Social Club (Fernhurst Working Men's Institute - Charity Reg. No. 287759).
They also elucidated their ambitions for the club's future and how they expected to achieve
these.

19/20 Previous Minutes: The Minutes of the meeting of the **15 January 2020** were
approved and signed after minor amendment.

Proposed: Cllr Inns, seconded: Cllr Timms.

20/20 Matters Arising From The Minutes Not Covered Below: None not covered below.

21/20 County Council Commentary: Cllr David Bradford advised the meeting that West
Sussex County Council had elected Paul Marshall as leader of the council executive.
Despite this increase in locally raised taxation the decrease in funding from central
government continues to reduce the council's overall spending power. In excess of 50% of
WSCC spending is on social services for children and the elderly.
Roads maintenance, particularly pothole repairs, is a never ending burden as increasing
road use and wet weather cause deterioration.
WSCC has reached an agreement with East Sussex County Council to utilise the services
of their Chief Executive on a shared basis until a permanent arrangement is agreed.

22/20 District Council Commentary: Chichester District Councillor Peter Wilding advised
that there would be an increase of about £5 in the Band D precept.

23/20 Fernhurst Social Club: The council had listened to the current senior officers of the
club and expressed its hope that it would in future continue to provide a meeting place in
the village for people of all ages and aspirations. It is regarded as an asset to the
community and should continue to serve the needs of the community.

24/20 Cemetery: Unauthorised tree cutting has taken place in the council's cemetery and a subsequent meeting has taken place with the new owner of the adjacent garage. He has agreed to submit a planning application in respect of work already carried out and for the removal of a tree he wishes to also remove.

25/20 Crossfield/The Leys: Land adjacent to the junction with Vann Road is unregistered. Enquiries have been directed at the registered office and the accountants of the company that Chichester District Council advised purchased the land in 1978. To date no response has been received.

Chichester District Council Environmental Health advised that they hold no practical powers to compel any action by the landowner. Cllr Inns has offered to email Mark Armitage of Hyde Housing Association Ltd to enquire if they are willing and able to offer any practical assistance. **Action: (Cllr Inns)**

26/20 Fernhurst Park/Syngenta Planning Application: The application still awaits determination by the South Downs Park Planning Department. There is currently no known date for the decision although it is understood negotiations continue between the developer and South Downs National Park Authority planning officers on detailed matters.

27/20 Dog Fouling: An advertisement has been placed in the March edition of the Fernhurst News to promote responsible dog ownership.

28/20 Banking Facilities: Cllr Bicknell has continued her progress with National Savings & Investments and electronic banking facilities with NatWest Bank.

29/20 Website/Email/Software: The clerk advised that he considered the council's website to have dated badly and on the platform it is presented (WordPress) is not maintainable by non-expert personnel. Additionally, dissatisfaction had been expressed with the council provided email service on Claranet. Councillors were providing Microsoft Office software at their own expense for council business and this was often outdated and/or unsupported. The clerk expressed the view that all councillors should be provided with a council funded subscription to Office 365, which would be available at minimum expense.

A potential one-off cost of £1,500 to £2,000 would be incurred to create a new website on a more easily maintained platform, a new email service and Office 365 in the new financial year. The clerk will continue his enquiries.

Resolved: To approve a budget of £1,500 - £2,000 for the above project.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield, seconded Cllr Inns.

30/20 Correspondence & Other Matters:

Councillors' & Clerk's Announcements: A date for the Annual General Meeting of the Parish still needs to be set. **Action: (All)**

31/20 MONTHLY EXECUTIVE REPORTS/COMMITTEE MATTERS

Finance and Administration

- Bank reconciliation for January was presented for approval.

Proposed: Cllr Inns, seconded Cllr Timms.

- Authorisation of list of payments and signing of cheques for February approved.

Proposed: Cllr Timms, seconded Cllr Inns.

- **Planning Committee:** Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of **6 January 2020** received, noted and accepted.
- **Property, Highways and Environment Committee:** Minutes of the meeting of the **9 December 2019 & 13 January 2020** received, noted and accepted.
- **Public Toilets:** Cllr Black advised that legal documents in respect of the public toilets refurbishment have been signed and returned to the council’s lawyers.
- **Van Common:** Cllr Black has a meeting with West Sussex County Council on the 14 February at Van Common to discuss potential work on the currently blocked culvert.
- **Village Ranger (Handyman)** It was agreed to award a new honorary title to the Village Handyman: henceforth to be known as the Village Ranger. A new cost structure was also agreed.

32/20 UPDATES ON LOCAL ISSUES

- **Services and Facilities for Young People:** Cllr Inns advised the meeting that Fernhurst Youth Club was due to organise a “community clean-up” with the support of Hyde Charity Foundation. A new kitchen and flooring is needed for which funds are being sought.

Attendance numbers have increased in the Junior Club but the Senior Club is still not functioning for lack of support.

- **Fernhurst Village Hall:** No report.
- **Policing:** The new local Police Community Support Officer is to be invited to the Annual Parish Meeting when a date is set.
- **Fernhurst Primary School:** A meeting at the school on the 24 February will see Cllr Jenkins attend in the absence of Cllr Bloomfield.
- **Fernhurst Recreation Ground:** No report.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Date of Next Meeting: 11 March 2020

Chairman Signed:.....

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