

Minutes of a meeting of Chelsham and Farleigh Parish Council held on 6th March 2023 in Farleigh Hall, Farleigh Court Road at 7.00pm

Present: Cllr Jan Moore (in the Chair)

Cllr Neil Chambers Cllr Peter Cairns Cllr Jeremy Pursehouse Cllr Barbara Lincoln

In attendance: Samantha Head (Clerk)

And 3 parishioners

The meeting commenced at 7.04pm

1. Apologies for absence

0024/0323 Cllr Lesley Brown had sent her apologies. These were received and accepted by members.

2. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest by Councillors of personal pecuniary interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interests, and whether the member regards the interest to be prejudicial under the terms of the new Code of Conduct. Anyone with prejudicial interest must, unless an exemption applies, or a dispensation has been issues, withdraw from the meeting.

0025/0323 Cllr Barbara Lincoln declared an interest in item 14 ref: TA/2023/97/TPO and would therefore take no part in the discussion or decision for this item.

3. Public participation

- The dip in Farleigh Court Road - soakaway - needs action.
- Re: Biggin Hill Airport - comment that London Borough of Bromley Council is not prepared to engage with parish councils in neighbouring, and affected, areas. Perhaps something to refer to County Councillor Becky Rush.

4. To approve and sign the minutes of the previous council meeting held on 6th February 2023

0026/0323 Members proved the minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2023. These were duly signed by the Chair.

5. Matters arising (for information only)

- The Bull - The Chairman noted that a representative from the brewery was meeting Mr Butcher the following day and had accepted the PC's offer to meet afterwards. Signage size and distances from the road needed to be checked.
- Warlingham Parish Council would be circulating a questionnaire regarding neighbourhood plans.
- Natural England - the Clerk confirmed she had sent the form back with offer to sample other pieces of parish owned land.

6. Reports:**a) County Councillor**

No report

b) District Councillor

Cllr Pursehouse gave the following updates:

- Cllr Pursehouse had attended a meeting at TDC about next corporate planning - what the DC wishes to achieve over the coming 5 years. One item raised was the DC working more closely with parish councils.

7. Commons - Farleigh Common Headlease

The Chairman reported that there was no big update other than there would be a meeting later in the week involving the TDC office dealing with the headlease. He has been in contact with Merton College. The meeting is for parties to discuss ideas. Several questions were raised regarding the headlease negotiations: was a reply from TDC about maintenance costs of the common received? Officers had indicated an overall annual cost of £23,000. However, when broken down, these costs equate roughly to: £11,000 mowing and £12,000 trees. The mowing costs are actually only about 50% of the quoted figure, as there is also a cost associated with having the cut grass removed. The £12,000 costs for tree work is a projected cost. Cllr Pursehouse is in discussion about getting the hay taken away and used to reduce these costs.

It was confirmed that TDC owns Little Farleigh Common and Great Farleigh Common is owned by Merton College and leased by TDC.

Members also noted that the permissive path - Little Park Wood - is churned up and very boggy.

8. Ratify Bob Anderson as airport liaison

Bob Anderson declined to act as airport liaison but he did offer to share updates as and when he becomes aware of them.

9. Tree on Limpsfield Road

The Chairman explained that she had obtained a quote from a local tree surgeon. This was very reasonably priced and accepted by all councillors. However, due to the location of the tree so close to the highway, this firm did not have the requisite training / documents to work on or near a highway.

The Clerk sought a quote from Down to Earth Trees Ltd, as they are appropriately licenced. This would be £600 for the tree works, £395 for the traffic management and local authority costs - road work permits - costs unknown at present.

0027/0323 Members discussed the need for the work to be carried out urgently as the tree was a hazard and therefore approved the costs. The Clerk was requested to liaise with DtE.

10. Local Government Boundary Commission for England - TDC Electoral Review - Parish Council draft submission

The Electoral Review was discussed at the February meeting. Four members of the council had voted to remain linked to Warlingham East. One councillor had subsequently stated that they did not believe that was the case. It was agreed to discuss and review this decision at this meeting.

It was noted that this is a large and complex subject. The report Cllr Chambers gave at the last meeting did not cover all the issues that the PC should consider. Cllr Chambers felt that the review should be looked at from a district-wide perspective. All possible links should be considered. For example, links with adjacent rural parishes (Tatsfield & Titsey, Woldingham). At the last meeting, facts and figures had not been properly analysed, nor had there been the opportunity to speak to members of neighbouring parishes.

Cllr Chambers stated that Chelsham & Farleigh had strong rural similarities with Woldingham and Tatsfield & Titsey. The Boundary Commission would be looking for areas of similar concern. In joining C&F with Tatsfield & Titsey and Woldingham, as a 2-member ward, would equate to just over 2,000 electors per councillor.

Due to the District Council standing down in 3rds, the Boundary Commission has stated that 3-member wards of 4,500 - 5,500 electors would be preferable.

The Boundary Commission has said that there is a democratic deficit in 1-member wards.

The Chairman had spoken to the Tatsfield PC Chair who has confirmed that the council had no intention of suggesting a rural alliance and would be putting forward a comment endorsing remaining a 1-member ward.

The Chair at Woldingham PC had indicated that the PC might look favourably on a

The question was asked about what the parishioners of C&F would want if asked to vote. To maintain the status quo or opt to break from Warlingham East and join Woldingham? It was suggested that even if the PC opted to maintain the status quo, it would not prevent developing working relationships with other neighbouring parish councils.

Cllr Pursehouse noted that many C&F residents would likely, if asked, consider Warlingham village centre as their village centre, as it was the closest to C&F. He also recounted from his boundary Commission briefing that there would need to be compelling evidence from 1-member wards as to why they should remain as 1 - member wards.

The Chairman asked members to vote, reminding them that any comments would need to be submitted by 20th March. 4 members voted in favour of remaining linked with Warlingham East and 1 voted in opposition of that.

0028/0323 With the vote in favour of remaining aligned to Warlingham East, a comment would be submitted to that effect.

11. AONB / ACV

Cllr Chambers and Cllr Moore had attended webinar sessions hosted by Surrey Hills. The key points were that proposals on new AONB boundaries would be announced on 7th March. The public consultation period would run for 14 weeks. The Chairman thanked Cllr Chambers for all his hard work not his.

12. Annual Parish Meeting - change of date

Due to the forthcoming elections, it was agreed that the APM date needed to be moved from the previously agreed date of 11th May. The Chairman had emailed TDC's CPO, Cliff Thurlow, to ask his availability on the 18th and 25th May.

13. Invitation to service at All Saint's Church, Warlingham - 20th April 14:00 - centenary of unveiling of Royal Fusiliers War Memorial

The Chairman had received an invitation for the whole Parish Council to attend the service. Cllrs Moore, Chambers and Lincoln indicated they would like to attend.

14. Planning - to determine the Parish Council's position on Appendix A

TA/2023/97/TPO Henley Croft

Beech) - To uplift the crown 7ft above ground level and to a distance of 6ft from the roof of the outbuildings of Henley Croft. Horse Chestnut) - To uplift the crown 7ft above ground level and to a distance of 6ft from the roof of the outbuildings of Henley Croft.

0029/0323 Comment: Chelsham and Farleigh Parish Council leaves this decision to Alastair Durkin, noting that a Tree Preservation Order is in place and should be respected.

TA/2022/1567 Pineacre, Southfields Road, Woldingham CR3 7BG

Erection of ground floor extension and lower ground floor infill to Pineacre and formation of self-contained annex / unit.

The Clerk had checked with TDC that this application was definitely for C&F PC to consider and it was confirmed as such. Subsequent, follow up with Woldingham PC had

confirmed that it did fall to Woldingham PC. Therefore, no discussion or comment was needed.

TA/2023/31 75 Farleigh Road, Warlingham CR6 9EJ

Hoarding measuring 2.5m in height x 34m in length.

The Clerk had checked with TDC that this application was definitely for C&F PC to consider and it was confirmed as such. Subsequent, follow up with Warlingham PC had confirmed that it did fall to Warlingham PC. Therefore, no discussion or comment was needed.

TA/2022/1447 Land to the North of Church Lane, Chelsham, Warlingham CR6 9PG

Installation of new vehicle crossover with hardstanding and erection of fence and gate.

Members discussed the previous history of Holt Wood and that the plot in question has an Article 4 Direction on it. This removes permitted development rights. To access the plot would involve crossing SCC owned land.

0030/0323 Comment: Chelsham and Farleigh Parish Council strongly objects to this application. Holt Wood is an Ancient Woodland in the AGLV Green Belt covered by a blanket TPO, and the plot in question has an Article 4 Direction on it.

Since passing from Forestry Commission possession into private ownership in 1983, Holt Wood has acquired a lengthy and unfortunate history of differences arising from the protected status of the wood and creeping development within it. Rather than repeat the details of that history here, which has led to eight dwellings being built in the wood when originally there were none, the Parish Council directs the officer's attention to its comments in TA/2020/1831 for further details.

Having passed into private hands, the wood was divided into 11 plots that were variously sold off, with plot J of that sale comprising 7.4 acres parallel to Church Lane and backed by Ledger's Wood, which is a Nature Reserve. The majority of old plot J was sold by a subsequent private owner to County Mayo Estates Limited, Dublin, who have broken it down into some 18 sale plots facing onto the road, most if not all of which have been put on the market and sold. The current application relates to plots M and N of these 18 plots.

The applicant's Transport Assessment document states that 'In order to explore future development options, a crossover is required in order that the Applicant can gain vehicular access into the site. It is proposed that a simple priority junction is provided.' The installation of crossovers and hardstanding on this and potentially further plots along Church Road would cumulatively be very damaging to the wildlife, existing character and visual amenity of the wood. There are no special circumstances here to override Green Belt protection. As stated above, an Article 4 Direction exists on this and the other plots due to the unsatisfactory history outlined above, and therefore no development can take place on them.

The parish council notes that there is a disused gate and small unkept clearing in one of the plots, which the parish council believes was created after the wood passed into private hands, possibly without permission for a horse paddock. The parish council expects that the clearing should now be allowed to regenerate into woodland.

The parish council has strongly represented to Tandridge District Council planning department and Surrey County Council the threats posed to Holt Wood in an effort to better protect the wood after a regrettable period of decline, and it has warned that further attempts to develop sections of the wood for housing or commercial use remain a possibility and would increase the harm to its character and wildlife. Accordingly, the parish council objects strongly to this application.

15. Finance**Payment of invoices:**

Samantha Head	Salary	£476.00
Vision ICT	Domain renewal	£ 78.00
Farleigh Church Hall	Meetings May - Dec 2023 plus APM	£240.00

0031/0323 Members approved the payment. The invoices were checked and initialled by Cllr Moore.

16. Correspondence received (for reporting only)

- Letter regarding horse riding on Farleigh Common

17. Matters for reporting or inclusion in a Future Agenda

- Handy Man jobs

The meeting closed at 9.07pm