



FELBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month (except January and August)
at 7.30pm in Felbridge Village Hall

Minutes of the Felbridge Parish Council Meeting held on 5th September 2024 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room at Felbridge Village Hall

Present:

Cllr. Bridget Huntington (Chairman)
Cllr. Jane Groom
Cllr. Nigel Lea

Cllr. Jeremy Clarke (Planning Chairman)
Cllr. Stephen Hall

In attendance:

Cllr. Nicholas White, District Councillor
Cllr. Nicola O'Riordan, District Councillor
Mr. Peter Brooks, Felbridge & Sunnyside Cricket Club
Mrs. Patricia Slatter (Clerk)

Peter Brooks from Felbridge & Sunnyside Cricket Club attended the meeting to share information with councillors on the club's plans to rebuild the pavilion which will be used as a community facility and open all year round. The project is reaching the planning application stage. Applications for funding have been submitted and the project is supported by the District Councillors for Felbridge.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. McBryde, Cllr. Horwood and County Councillor Steeds

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

None in addition to those which were previously disclosed

3. APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th July were approved and signed.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Playground Upgrade

The new playground is now open and has been hugely popular. It was noted that the base was uneven in parts and this has been recorded on the completion certificate to be monitored. Overall the completed project is excellent.

5. FINANCE

(i) Receipts and Payments for July and August 2024

Date	To / From	Description	Amount	Current Account	Deposit Account
30 June		Brought Forward		£27700.76	£25441.57
		Receipts		0.00	
		Payments			
8 July	Payroll	Salary/Tax/NI	£1396.94	-1396.94	
8 July	WR Hazeltine	Bus Shelter Cleaning June	£45.00	-45.00	
8 July	Clerk Expenses	Hard Drive for CCTV	£176.00	-176.00	
7 June	NEST	Pension	£191.92	-191.92	
		Sub-Total	£1809.86	-1809.86	
				£25890.90	£25441.57
		Transfers	Nil		
		Carried Forward		£25890.90	£25441.57
		Bank Balances		£25890.90	£25441.57
31 July	Available Funds - Current a/c plus Deposit a/c			£51332.47	
31 July	Allocated Reserves - bus shelter £6K, playground £17K, skateboard ramp £2k, <i>includes restricted use CIL revenue</i>			-£25000.00	
31 July	General Reserve (available funds - including budgeted expenditure - minus Allocated Reserves)			£26332.47	
Current Account statement was circulated to councillors on 3 rd September 2024, along with the above record of receipts and payments, for transparency and confirmation of accuracy					
Date	To / From	Description	Amount	Current Account	Deposit Account
31 July		Brought Forward		£25890.90	£25441.57
		Receipts		0.00	
		Payments			
2 August	J Clarke	CCTV Upgrade	£1098.79	-1098.79	
2 August	Hire-A-Loo	Temporary Toilet Hire June	£145.66	-145.66	
2 August	Payroll	Salary/Tax/NI August	£1396.94	-1396.94	
9 August	NEST	Pension	£191.92	-191.92	
		Sub-Total	£2833.31	-2833.31	
				£23057.59	£25441.57
		Transfers	Nil		
		Carried Forward		£23057.59	£25441.57
		Bank Balances		£23057.59	£25441.57
31 August	Available Funds - Current a/c plus Deposit a/c			£48499.16	
31 August	Allocated Reserves - bus shelter £6K, playground £17K, skateboard ramp £2k, <i>includes restricted use CIL revenue</i>			-£25000.00	
31 August	General Reserve (available funds - including budgeted expenditure - minus Allocated Reserves)			£23499.16	
Current Account statement was circulated to councillors on 3 rd September 2024, along with the above record of receipts and payments, for transparency and confirmation of accuracy					

(ii) **External Audit:** On advice from the External Auditor, FPC have resubmitted the Annual Governance Statement amended to show full compliance. The Internal Auditor had advised that the period of rights notice was two days longer than needed and therefore not compliant but the External Auditor disagreed.

Action: Clerk to monitor

(iii) **Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2024-25. Resolved:** It was resolved to appoint Mulberry & Co as internal auditors for the financial year 2024-25 to provide a year-end audit at a cost of £70 per hour. The estimated time required is 3-4 hours. **Action:** Clerk to progress.

(iv) **Deposit Account Transfer:** £20K has been transferred from deposit account reserves to the current account before being transferred to TDC towards the cost of the Playground Upgrade. Two councillors signed the record of transfer.

(v) **CIL Funds Transfer to TDC:** Awaiting formal request from TDC for FPC to transfer the agreed £20K in CIL revenue towards the £92K overall cost of the playground refurbishment. **Action:** Clerk to follow up

(vi) **Unity Trust Bank:** Previously approved transfer from Lloyds Bank to Unity Trust Bank to be progressed. Six councillors have agreed to be signatories to the account. There are several options for deposit accounts with current interest rates of around 3%. There is also the option of applying for a payment card. **Resolved:** It was agreed that there should be a payment card to cover both recurring and ad-hoc budgeted expenditure in compliance with the new Financial Regulations. **Action:** Clerk to progress

(vii) **Playground Hedge and Wire Fencing:** The Playground Inspector noted that the hedge was overgrown and in need of attention. Nick Dance has quoted a total of £450 to cut the full height of the hedge from the Crawley Down Road to beyond the skateboard ramp and to repair the damaged wire fence. TDC have agreed to split the cost. **Expenditure Approved:** £225 to be transferred to TDC after works have been completed. **Action:** Clerk to progress.

6. VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

(i) **Grass Cutting:** The third Urban Cut took place in late August. Surrey Highways have agreed to include the Furnace Wood layby area in the Urban Cut but this will not be actioned until 2025. In the meantime, additional cuts will take place.

7. COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

Vehicle Activated Sign: Surrey Highways have now said that due to increased costs there is no longer funding available to replace the VAS on Crawley Down Road in the current financial year. If FPC are able to allocate CIL revenue to part-fund the replacement, Cllr. Steeds will ask Surrey Highways to make up the balance.

Doves Barn Licence Application: The applicant has responded to say that they agree to adding a restriction to operate within the main sales area of the nursery glasshouses to the Premises Licence conditions.

Star Junction Resurfacing: Surrey Highways have said that the resurfacing scheme is included in the 2025/26 maintenance programme. The scheme is also included as a reserve scheme for the 2024/25

Overgrown Trees on Crawley Down Road: Surrey Highways have cut back overhanging branches of trees around Warren Close.

8. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

Gatwick Airport: Cllr. White reported that the Inspector will respond to the latest Gatwick Airport plans in December. The plans would lead to an increase in flights from 275K to 380K which would in turn have an impact on the surrounding roads and transport infrastructure.

Replacement Bins: Cllr. White has arranged for replacement bins for outside Felbridge School and at Hedgecourt Lake following a request from FPC.

Dark Skies Event, Dormansland: Cllr. White extended an invitation to Felbridge residents to attend the event which takes place in the grounds of the War Memorial Hall.

9. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS/UPDATES

Hedge between School and Village Green: Cllr. Hall reported that this hedge has still not be cut by Surrey Highways despite it being first reported more than six months ago. **Action:** Clerk to raise again.

Footpath 286 is overgrown. **Action:** Cllr. Hall to report to Surrey Rights of Way.

A22 Footpath alongside Whittington College: **Action:** Cllr. Groom to report overhanging trees obstructing the footpath to Surrey Highways.

40mph Sign on A22: Following Cllr. McBryde's report of a damaged sign at the start of Woodcock Hill in June which Surrey Highways said would be repaired, Cllr. Huntington has now reported that the sign has fallen over and is on the verge. She has again reported this issue.

Limes Pond: Cllr. Huntington has again chased up TDC regarding the overdue clearance of the pond.

New Vicar: Cllr. Huntington reported that there will be a new vicar for St. John's Church and that Cllr. McBryde will attend the investiture on behalf of Felbridge Parish Council.

Weeds Alongside Playground: Cllr. Lea commented that there was still one section of weeds alongside the playground. The Clerk advised that TDC had missed this section. It was hoped to replace this area (and the grassed section on the other side) with concrete to border the playground base once funding was available.

A22/A264 Corridor Project: Cllr. Clarke commented on the information provided by Cllr. Steeds following this week's Steering meeting. He was concerned that it had been a year since the last meeting and the Minutes had only just been circulated in draft which meant that no action had been taken in that time. It was noted that despite Surrey Highways Officers being in attendance at the October 2023 meeting, they did not advise a councillor who referenced a proposal for two lanes to turn right at the Star Junction that this option had already been rejected by SCC. It was a concern that there seemed to be little or no progress on a project which was of great importance to Felbridge. Both Cllr. White and Cllr. O'Riordan said that they will attend the next meeting which is for District Councillors.

10. SURREY HIGHWAYS/RIGHTS OF WAY/TDC

Limes Pond Clearance: TDC have still not scheduled this work

Skateboard Ramp: Still awaiting contractor to make repairs.

Surrey Highways Vegetation Cuts: Request submitted for locations including the Furnace Wood layby area; the hedge on the Copthorne Road behind the woods; and the overgrown vegetation in the seating and parking area at Hedgecourt Lake.

11. PLANNING

(i) Applications in Felbridge

Applications considered at the Planning Meeting on 1st August

2024/703 Old Yew Tree Cottage, 110 Copthorne Road, Felbridge, RH19 2NU

Resolved: No Action

2024/656 Crawley Down Garage, Snow Hill, Crawley Down, RH10 3EQ

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council note the objections by local residents on the MSDC Planning Portal (ref DM/23/0504) and have nothing further to add.

2024/716 Peacock Lodge, Eastbourne Road, Newchapel, Surrey, RH7 6HL

Resolved: No Action

2023/1036 Garden Centre, Herons, Wire Mill Lane, Newchapel, Surrey, RH7 6HJ

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council would like to restate their previous comments.

"Felbridge Parish Council always support local businesses where possible and consider this proposal to be an improvement to the site and to constitute no further impact on the Green Belt".

Applications considered at the Planning Meeting on 15th August

2024/726 Agricultural land East of Woodcock Hill, Felbridge, RH19 2RD

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council objects to this application. We consider that the building in the proposed position will 'significantly impact' the openness of the Green Belt contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and TDC policy DP13(F) ostensibly because the new development is being pushed away and behind the curtilage of the existing dwellings and into the open field. FPC would prefer to see it hugging the south boundary of the open area.

2024/794 Agricultural land East of Woodcock Hill, Felbridge, RH19 2RD

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council objects to this application. We consider that Plot 1 in the proposed position will 'significantly impact' the openness of the Green Belt contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and TDC policy DP13(F) ostensibly because the new development is being pushed away and behind the curtilage of the existing dwellings and into the open field. FPC would prefer to see it hugging the south boundary of the open area; as such it is noted that Plot 2 is within the curtilage of the developed area and we would much prefer to see a single building equivalent to that proposed in 2024/726 in the position of Plot 2 to avoid the significant impact upon the openness of the Green Belt.

2024/399 Fir View, Chapel Lane, Copthorne, Surrey RH10 3XX

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council note that there is volume calculation for the proposed changes (only sqm comparisons). We have no objections to the proposed extensions or garage design assuming that it complies with the Green Belt volume increase policy. However, we think that the location of the garage is too close to the boundary with the main road and we would prefer it to be much closer to the house to retain a more rural street scene along the main road.

2024/852/TPO Yerba Buena, Herons Close, Copthorne, Surrey RH10 3HE

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council defer to the opinion of the tree officer, in particular where limbs are being removed or cut back as to whether this is in the best interest of the protected tree long term health.

Applications considered at the Parish Council meeting**2024/865 Yerba Buena, Herons Close, Copthorne RH10 3HF**

Resolved: No Action

2024/836/NC & 2024/845/NC Leonards Turf Farm, West Park Road, Copthorne, RH7 6HT

Felbridge Parish Council wish to repeat the comments made on the original application references 2024/563/NC and 2024/570/NC

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council are unsure when the May 2024 changes to permitted agricultural development rights come into effect for the purposes of the determination of this application. The reason being that Q1 (P) specifies that development is not permitted if a building does not have a suitable existing access to a public highway. The proposed entrance shown on the plan is not an existing entrance to the site and the nearest adjacent entrance based on aerial photography from Google shows that it last appeared to be used in 2014 is cannot be considered to be current. The current access to this area of the field for the agricultural business is the corner of the field further to the west at West Park Road. The Transport Statement specifies that this site will have less vehicle movements than the existing building but the building has been redundant since 2014 therefore there can have been no associated vehicle movements. If the council was minded to approve the conversion of this barn to residential dwellings, then Felbridge Parish Council would prefer to see the three smaller dwellings option being approved rather than a five bedroomed house as this would support more affordable housing in a rural area.

(ii) Adjoining Planning which may affect Felbridge

Nothing which directly affects Felbridge

(iii) MSDC Development on Felbridge Border

Cllr. Clarke noted that further action is anticipated for the sites at Crawley Down Road and Imberhorne Lane in the coming weeks. **Action:** Clerk to monitor both the TDC and MSDC Planning Portals

12. CONSULTATIONS**Proposed planning reforms including amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework**

Following a discussion, it was agreed that Cllr. Clarke would draft a response to be circulated for approval by councillors before being submitted by the Clerk before the consultation deadline.

Safety of Lithium Ion batteries and e-bikes and scooters

It was decided not to submit a response to this consultation.

13. CLERK'S REPORT

Correspondence: Positive feedback on the playground upgrade via social media from multiple residents. Resident has asked that the hedge on the Copthorne Road to the back of the woods at the Village Hall is cut back as it is blocking the narrow footpath. Added to the list for the SCC vegetation cuts.

New Model Financial Regulations: **Resolved:** Councillors approved the adoption of the updated regulations. **Action:** Clerk to upload to website.

Lunch Club Request: The Felbridge Lunch Club have asked FPC to donate new mugs and a meat thermometer for their lunch for the elderly held each month. **Resolved:** Councillors wish to support this valued local voluntary group and agreed that the Clerk should buy the items needed for donation. **Action:** Clerk to progress with Lunch Club.

Proposal from Surrey Community Action for Housing Survey: It was noted that Surrey Community Action declined Felbridge Parish Council's request that they disclose to residents that their previous survey in 2021 was part-funded by a developer who wanted to develop a specific site on which they had previously had an application for market housing refused both on application and at appeal. **Resolved:** Felbridge Parish Council decline the offer of a second Housing Survey from Surrey Community Action.

Roadworks: Surrey Highways agreed to FPC's request to delay roadworks associated with the development at 11a Crawley Down Road to include half-term. The works will take place from 28th October-14th November with two-way lights on the Copthorne Road for the first week and a full closure of Crawley Down Road for the full duration.

Clerk's Contract: Now amended to show salary payment date at month end rather than mid-month. The payroll management company will make the necessary amendment in September.

14. BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING

Second quarter financial review

Remembrance – Silent Soldier and laying of Poppy Wreaths

14. DATES OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL AND PLANNING MEETINGS

The next full Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday 3rd October. A Planning meeting is scheduled for 19th September

The meeting closed at approximately 2120.

Patricia Slatter

Clerk to Felbridge Parish Council

www.felbridge-pc.org.uk

Registered Office: Felbridge Village Hall, Crawley Down Road, Felbridge, RH19 2NT

www.felbridge-pc.org.uk | Chairman: Bridget Huntington | Parish Clerk: Patricia Slatter clerk@felbridge-pc.gov.uk