

FELBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

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

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th July 2019 **at 7.30 pm in Felbridge Village Hall**

Present:

Cllr. Jeremy Clarke
Cllr. Ian McBryde (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr. Lesley Steeds (County Councillor)

Cllr. Joan Harwood
Cllr. Jo King
Cllr. Ken Harwood (District Councillor)

Mrs. Patricia Slatter (in attendance)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillor Georgina Chapman and Councillor Bridget Huntington.

2. **DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS** No additions to those already registered.

3. **APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 6th June 2019 were approved and signed.

4. **ONGOING ITEMS**

(i) **Community Consultation:**

Leisure and Health Actions: Nothing new to report

Transport and Environment Actions: Nothing new to report

(ii) **Grass Cutting:**

Contractors appointed by Felbridge Parish Council have completed a full Urban Cut to a high standard including cutting back the overgrown vegetation on the Snow Hill roundabout and at Rowplatt Lane which was affecting sight lines for road users.

5. FINANCE

(i) Receipts and Payments for June 2019

Date	To / From	Description	Amount	Current Account	Deposit Account
1 st June		Brought Forward		£29116.17	£25,026.20
		Receipts			
14 June	Lloyds Bank	Returned post-dated cheque	£1,105.01	£1,105.01	
		Sub-Total		£30,221.18	
		Payments			
5 June	Cleaner	Bus Shelter Cleaning	£40.00	-£40.00	
7 June	Kompan	Playground spare part	£40.93	-£40.93	
11 June	HMRC	Tax/NI	£136.80	-£136.80	
12 June	Village Hall	Annual Room/Storage Hire	£318.10	-£318.10	
13 June	Councillor	Expenses	£44.77	-£44.77	
14 June	Holtje Windows	Panel for Bus Shelter	£425.00	-£425.00	
14 June	Came & Co.	Annual Insurance Premium	£644.49	-£644.49	
14 June	Clerk	Payroll	£1,105.01	-£1105.01	
14 June	Clerk	Office Expenses	£144.26	-£144.26	
26 June	Cleaner	Bus Shelter Cleaning	£40.00	-£40.00	
		Sub-Total	£2939.36	-£2939.36	
		Transfers			
		Nil			
30 June		Carried Forward		£27281.82	£25,026.20
		Less Unbanked Transactions		-£384.23	
		Bank Balances pending unbanked transactions		£26897.59	£25,026.20
30 June	Available Funds - Current a/c plus Deposit a/c excluding unbanked transactions (includes CIL revenue of £22669.03)			£52308.02	
30 June	Allocated Reserves (traffic calming £2k, bus shelter £6k, playground £15k, skateboard ramp £2k, grass cutting £1k)			-£26,000.00	
30 June	General Reserve (Available Funds minus Allocated Reserves)			£26,308.02	
The balances for both the current and deposit accounts were verified against the latest online bank statements and signed by the Chairman as accurate.					

(ii) **First Quarter Budget Review:** The Clerk updated councillors on the current financial position. Income and Expenditure is as budgeted for the first quarter.

(iii) **Section 137 Payments:** None for this period. Flyer has been prepared for display at the Village Hall and through District Councillor's newsletter. **Action:** Clerk to post on noticeboard

(iv) **Financial Operations: Agreed:** Since the Clerk has now taken on the role of Responsible Financial Officer, it was agreed that the payroll should be managed by an external agent.

Expenditure Approved: Payroll management costs of £180 per annum were approved.

6. COUNCILLORS' FEEDBACK

(i) **Gate by Birch Grove:** Gate due for delivery to contractor w/c 8th July. Contractor will prepare the area and cut back vegetation before installing gate. **Action:** Clerk to liaise with contractor to arrange for installation.

(ii) **Off Road Footpaths:** Overgrown footpaths 261, 263, 286 and the damaged stile on 258 have been reported to the Rights of Way team at Surrey County Council. **Action:** Clerk to monitor.

(iii) **Dog Fouling Signs: Expenditure Approved** for up to £20 to cover the cost of signs to be fixed to posts or fencing on or near footpaths where dog walkers are failing to use the bins provided. **Action:** Cllr. Clarke to progress.

- (iv) **Road Signs:**
- (v) Councillor King reported that there are still old road signs along the A22 and A264. **Action:** Clerk to report again.
- (vi) **Flower Seeding on Grass Verges:** Cllr. King suggested that some areas of Felbridge might be suitable for flower seeding instead of grass cutting. This would need to be in areas where sight lines were not a problem. **Action:** Clerk to investigate with Surrey Highways.
- (vii) **Fallen Tree, Furnace Wood:** A fallen tree/branches on the verge by the bus stop at Furnace Wood was affecting sight lines and being clipped by vehicles which had led to debris on the roadside. **Action:** Clerk to report to Surrey Highways and ask local officer to investigate.
- (viii) **Transport Plans for New Developments:** Cllr. Clarke advised that Felbridge Parish Council should be asked to be consulted on the transport plans for the three developments allowed on appeal with access roads in Felbridge. **Action:** Clerk to contact both TDC and MSDC and report back.

7. **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATE**

(i) **Flooding**

Councillor Ken Harwood reported that he was liaising with residents and co-ordinating a cross agency investigation into the cause of the recent flooding on the Cophorne Road and Village Green and would report back. He would be working with all interested parties to find a way to prevent future problems. The area has now been sanitised.

(ii) **Stub Pond Lane**

The Dog Waste Bin has been relocated away from the original location since it had been placed in a dip which regularly became muddy. There have been further instances of fly tipping in the area.

8. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE** Councillor Lesley Steeds reported that Surrey County Council continue to operate with severe financial restrictions meaning that parishes have to fund and manage more and more general maintenance. She agreed that the grass cutting carried out by SCC's contractor was 'appalling' and she had raised this issue with the officers responsible.

9. **SURREY HIGHWAYS:**

A resident reported that branches from two trees were overhanging the Crawley Down Road and were considered a hazard. Clerk has reported this both to Surrey Highways and Tandridge District Council who maintain the verges on this road.

District Councillor Ken Harwood left the meeting.

10. **PLANNING**

(i) **Applications in Felbridge**

Applications Considered at the Planning Meeting on 20th June 2019 attended by Cllr Chapman, Cllr Clarke, Cllr. Joan Harwood, Cllr. Huntington, Cllr. King and Cllr. McBryde.

TA/2019/1006 26 Rowplatt Lane, Felbridge, RH19 2PA Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.

Resolved: No Action

Applications considered at the full Parish Council meeting.

TA/2019/1061 Blackberry House, Herons Close, Cophorne, RH10 3HF Erection of new garden outbuilding.

Resolved: Felbridge Parish Council object to this proposal as it is over development of the Green Belt site and are concerned that the proposal touches the property boundary.

(ii) **Applications Received by Neighbouring Authorities**

None which directly impact Felbridge.

(iii) **Appeals:**

(a) **17 Copthorne Road & 15/39 Crawley Down Road:** Cllr. Clarke provided a summary to councillors on both recent appeals. The Appeal concerned two sites; land behind 17 Copthorne Road and land behind 15 & 39 Crawley Down Road. Both sites had been granted consent by Mid Sussex District Council but the entrances/access are within Tandridge District and had not received consent. Tandridge had provided a statement of case citing severe cumulative impact upon traffic supported by their recent traffic survey indicating the PM queue stretched back to Mill Lane on 3 consecutive days. Felbridge Parish Council had also submitted a detailed statement of case centred on the cumulative traffic impact. Tandridge District Council withdrew their objections immediately prior to the appeal hearing, on the advice of their QC, thus their transport consultant was unable to present any evidence. FPC still presented their case and became the only defendant at the Appeal. Whilst there was a huge range of items discussed during the two-day hearing, there were a number of significant points to note;

1) Because TDC do not have a current District Plan, they are unable to demonstrate a five-year housing supply. The inspector noted that the houses are in Mid Sussex but stated that the housing need is for a general area and the presence of the County Boundary does not mean that houses built in Mid Sussex would not support the housing supply in Tandridge. This means that the planning decision becomes a 'tilted balance' weighing up the benefits and downsides of the proposals, rather than being a black and white decision as to whether it satisfies all the planning policies. Thus (for example) the fact that the houses are to be built in the Mid Sussex 'area of development restraint' does not prevent the applications being approved, it only weighs against them.

2) The transport impact arguments were very similar to those for the Hill Place Farm site in East Grinstead which was approved at Appeal last year. The Inspector had fully read the evidence in that case, and this was regularly referred to by the Appellant's QCs. That case had raised the subject of queue length surveys and their methodology. Vectos had provided the traffic survey supporting the Hill Place Farm proposal and had used people observing the queue to identify the last stationary car before the lights went green. Jubb had used a dash-cam in a car driving in the opposite direction to see how far back the queue stretched. The inspector for Hill Place Farm concluded that the Jubb method was flawed as it was unable to see if anything, other than the traffic lights in question, was holding up the queue by the time they saw the last car. The Jubb queue was characterised as being a short stationary queue followed by a long stretch of slow-moving vehicles that would move in groups so short gaps appeared in the queue when drivers were slow to close the gap with the car in front.

3) The queue length methodology is critical as the transport modelling used to determine the current junction utilisation has to be validated against the current queue length before it can be used to predict the future junction utilisation after the housing has been completed. The Appellants presented that the Vectos methodology was the correct one to use for validation, and their modelling had been audited by Surrey Highways. The Vectos method determined the Copthorne Road queue was about 30 cars at peak times and the modelling showed the junction would be <95% utilised in the future state. The Inspector identified that the Appellants had also carried out an upstream traffic survey, this counts the cars going towards the Star during a time period and compares that to the number of cars that had gone through the lights in the same period which showed that the queue had grown by around 170 vehicles during the hour and the Inspector said this implied the junction was unable to cope. The inspector viewed the queues on his site visit and the slow-moving traffic stretched back to Mill Lane. The transport consultant for TDC had evidence to show that the upstream queue measurement was the correct method for validating the transport model, but he was unable to present that evidence as TDC had withdrawn from the appeal. The Inspector concluded that with the Hill Place Farm decision, two transport consultants presenting for these sites and with Surrey Highways endorsing the latest transport study and no Transport Consultant presenting contradicting evidence, that the Vectos method was correct and that the junction would still be below its maximum utilisation in the future.

4) The Inspector also concluded that the incremental impact of the combined total of 90 houses in relation to the existing volume of traffic using the junction was small.

5) The Inspector referred to the previous appeal for Gibbshaven Farm which had cited the impact upon the Star junction as a reason for refusal but dismissed this as that Appeal decision had been made before all of the latest and more extensive transport studies had been completed.

Thus, the Inspector Allowed the appeals, which means that the developments now have Planning Consent.

The outcome is that it is highly likely that TDC Planning Committee will be told that they cannot vote against a recommendation by Surrey Highways on transport grounds, as the Inspectorate is viewing the Surrey Highways endorsement as an additional expert witness supporting the proposal. Therefore it is highly unlikely that any further development applications will be refused on transport grounds unless Surrey Highways objects to them, and that would require them to change their audit method and approach to modelling validation.

Vote of Thanks: Vice-Chairman Councillor Ian McBryde offered a vote of thanks to Cllr Clarke on behalf of Felbridge Parish Council and local residents for the huge amount of work he had put into the appeals against approval of all three developments on Crawley Down and Cophorne Roads which have now been permitted on appeal. It was noted that this included a huge volume of research and preparation in addition to taking two days away from his own business to attend and address the hearing at Oxted.

Rowplatt Lane: It was recorded that the approval of these two applications would lead to a considerable increase in traffic on Rowplatt Lane both during the construction period and once the ninety properties had been occupied. Since the road is narrow and vehicles are required to park fully on the road to allow access for pedestrians on the narrow footpaths, councillors raised concerns about the impact this would have on the road and residents. Cllr Steeds agreed to investigate whether Rowplatt Lane could be resurfaced to help with the considerable increase in traffic. **Action:** Clerk to liaise with County Councillor and report back to September meeting.

(b) **Gibbshaven Farm Appeal:** Felbridge Parish Council's response has been submitted.

(c) **48 Crawley Down Road Appeal:** Felbridge Parish Council's response has been submitted.

District Councillor Harwood re-joined the meeting.

11. **CLERK'S REPORT**

(i) **Councillor Training/Update:** Councillors reported that the recent training/update session had been well received and thought that a discussion on managing Councillor Feedback would be useful. **Action:** Clerk to add to agenda for September meeting. Reference had been made to resources on the SSALC website. **Action:** Clerk to share the SSALC login details with all councillors.

(ii) **Banking:** There are still issues with transferring the management of the bank account to the Clerk and updating access to the account. The Clerk had met with the bank manager and some progress had been made. **Action:** Clerk to follow up.

(iii) **Parish Assembly:** Attended by the Chairman and Clerk at the Council Chamber at TDC. There was confirmation that paperless planning would continue with parishes opting in to pay to receive paper plans. **Resolved:** It was agreed that Felbridge Parish Council would order plans only for the more complicated applications and that Cllr. Clarke would continue to print documents needed for planning consideration.

The new system of Locality Officers for Tandridge was being rolled out from September and new online reporting forms were now available on the Council website. The links have been added to the Parish Council website.

- (iv) **Correspondence:** Complaints from a resident regarding parents parking on the double yellow lines by the primary school at drop off and pick up; questions regarding the 11A Crawley Down Road development from a new resident; concerns relating to flooding issues which are being co-ordinated by the District Councillor; query about when new gate next to Birch Grove would be installed;
- (v) **Hedge Cutting:** District Councillor Harwood has included a reminder in his newsletter that residents are responsible for cutting back their hedges where they border footpaths.
- (vi) **Advertising Sign:** Cllr. King removed an advertising sign which had been obscuring sight lines.

12. VILLAGE MAINTENANCE:

Footpath clearance to be carried out on the Copthorne Road, Crawley Down Road and London Road during July. The next urban grass cut will take place in August.

13. BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING: Planned Junction Improvement Plans for A22/A264 Star Junction following approval of three new developments in the immediate area.

14. DATES OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL AND PLANNING MEETINGS

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday 5th September at 7.30pm in the Committee Room. Planning Meetings are scheduled to take place on Thursday 18th July, Thursday 1st August and Thursday 15th August all at 7.00pm in the Committee Room.

The meeting closed at approximately 2120

Patricia Slatter
Clerk to Felbridge Parish Council

