

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 Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday, 5th April 2018 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall

Present: Mr. Jeremy Clarke (Chairman) Mr. Brian Apps
Mrs Linda Hainge Mr Ian McBryde
Mrs Joan Harwood Ms. Georgina Chapman
Mr. Alan Woodroffe (in attendance)
Mrs Patricia Slatter (in attendance)

The Chairman introduced himself and welcomed sixteen people to the meeting including Parish Councillors.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Mrs. Bridget Huntington; Mr Ken Harwood (District Councillor); Ms. Lesley Steeds (County Councillor).

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 6th April 2017 were approved and signed.

3. **MATTERS ARISING** – None

4. **REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The condition of our roads is still very poor in some places, with regular areas being repaired and breaking up shortly afterwards. We continue to press Surrey Highways who are responsible for our roads to improve the situation, unfortunately the severe highways funding cuts imposed by Surrey County Council has meant that they are having to prioritise efforts on only the most severe faults. We continue to press the County Council through our County Councillor although the list of unrepaired defects is increasing. We have also sought to secure some of the central government funds to repair Crawley Down Road.

As in previous years, we have had a number of significant planning matters that have raised local concerns. I will try to give a summary of where we are today regarding these. There are three developments that straddle the county boundary and therefore have to be approved by both MSDC and TDC before they can progress. The application for development behind 11a Crawley Down Road was approved by TDC, but there is no current MSDC application for the development of the land, as the previous approval expired. The application for land behind 12 Cophorne Road was approved by MSDC but TDC have not approved the access. The most recent application is for 63 houses behind the St. John's Ambulance site, again this was approved by MSDC but TDC have not approved the access. Although it is wholly in Mid Sussex, the application for development at Gibbshaven Farm would have a significant impact on traffic along Crawley Down Road and Rowplatt Lane. This application was refused by MSDC, although a revised application has been submitted recently which is still being determined. TDC are responsible for considering the traffic implications of approving the cross border applications, and we continue to work with them to ensure that the most accurate data is available upon which to base that decision.

In the past 2 weeks there has been a major local change in planning terms with the adoption of the Mid Sussex District Plan. This means that the East Grinstead and Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plans now have a full weight in planning terms and both of these Plans offer some protection from development on the Sussex side of the border in Felbridge.

As a result of the inconsiderate parking of contractor's vehicles at the end of Crawley Down Road, the Parish Council has pressed for double yellow lines to ensure a safe clear distance is maintained close to the junction. It is hoped that these will be installed in the very near future.

We spoke last time about the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds provided by development within the Surrey part of the village. This levy is paid by developers who increase the number of dwellings on a site, and is a direct means of providing funding for improvements to local infrastructure which are needed to meet the increased number of residents. In the past year the Parish Council received nearly £9,000 to support improvements, Tandridge received £50,000 from development in Felbridge and those funds are prioritised to also be expended on local improvements within the District Council's control. We would like to know if you have any specific local infrastructure improvements that are within our control or the District Council's control. We have used some of the funds to clear the footpaths along a number of the roads, installed new reflective bollards along Crawley Down Road, replaced the aged Parish Council notice boards and installed 'white gates' at the speed limit changes when entering the village from the North and West. We are currently investigating the provision of a drinking water fountain outside the Village Hall, improvements to the footpath through the woods behind the Hall, countryside access footpath clearance and the replacement of the rotten gate next to Birch Grove. It is also hopeful that Tandridge will use some of their CIL fund to replace the children's play area surface which has reached the end of its life.

We have been disappointed with the poor quality of the grass verge cutting around the Village and the Lingfield Hub grass cutting contract has not been renewed, for the coming year the work will be undertaken by Surrey County Council. But they will provide fewer cuts than we have previously had due to financial cuts. TDC have agreed to fund the additional cuts, but only for a single year and it seems likely that the burden will fall upon Parish Councils to use CIL funds or their Precept to fund additional cuts in the future.

The Parish Council has given financial support over the last year to First Responders, St. Catherine's Hospice and an additional CCTV camera at the Village Hall. Please remember that we can provide funds to support groups in the local area. To consider your requests for funding, you need to provide us with details of what the group does for the local area and what you want the funding to achieve.

Finally I wish to thank all of our Councillors who give their time voluntarily to your Parish Council. I also want to thank Pat Slatter for her significant input during the past year. I would also like to specifically thank Brian Apps, who has been a councillor for 15 years and our Responsible Finance Officer for much of that period. Brian is stepping down after his long service and Alan Woodroffe will be joining the Parish Council as a councillor and the Responsible Finance Officer. I want to wish Brian all the best for what will be a slightly quieter life; and then to thank Alan for wanting to join the Parish Council and provide his input for the village community. I know Brian will be assisting Alan as he picks up the ropes and I am confident that we will continue on a sound financial footing.

5. QUESTIONS FROM ATTENDEES

Speedwatch: A resident asked whether Speedwatch could be re-introduced in the village. The Clerk responded that FPC would be keen to see this initiative return. The issue was finding enough volunteers to make the project a success. So far only two people had volunteered and only one could be available during the rush hour. Any new volunteers would be welcome.

Signs at Roadside: A resident asked whether it was legal for companies to place advertising signs on the roadside. The Chairman responded that this was not permitted but that finding the person responsible and getting them to remove signs was difficult unless the signs had been placed by a recognised business. The Clerk would always contact businesses and give twenty-four hours' notice for advertising signs to be removed where the offender could be traced.

The meeting closed at 7.53pm

Patricia Slatter
Clerk to Felbridge Parish Council