



## **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 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024** **at 7.30pm in the Club Room at Felbridge Village Hall**

#### **Present:**

Cllr. Jeremy Clarke (Planning Chairman)  
Cllr. Nigel Lea

Cllr. Jane Groom  
Cllr. Ian McBryde (Vice-Chairman)

In attendance:

Cllr. Lesley Steeds, County and District Councillor  
Cllr. Nicholas White, District Councillor  
Mrs. Patricia Slatter (Clerk)

Cllr. Ian McBryde chaired the meeting.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr. Huntington, Cllr. Hall, Cllr. Horwood and District Councillor O'Riordan

#### **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 6<sup>th</sup> June were approved and signed.

#### **4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

##### **Playground Upgrade**

The Clerk reported that works to the playground were scheduled to start on 29<sup>th</sup> July and last for three weeks. TDC have cleared the area ready for installation. A sign has been placed at the playground, the website has been updated and Felbridge School will include information in their end of term newsletter. Agreement has been reached with the contractor for the Youth Shelter to be refurbished at the same time. Providing the benches are considered safe for use after removal, they will be relocated just outside the playground area. The bench alongside the hedge will be moved to alongside the toddler play area. **Action:** Clerk to update the Felbridge Village Hall Committee Chairman

## 5. FINANCE

### (i) Receipts and Payments for June 2024

Date	To / From	Description	Amount	Current Account	Deposit Account
31 May		Brought Forward	£30198.99	£30198.99	£25359.30
		Receipts		0.00	
10 June	Lloyds Bank	Interest Apr-June			£82.27
		Payments			
6 June	April Skies	Internal Audit Fee	£300.00	-300.00	
6 June	Chairman	Coronation Planter Plants	£74.43	-74.43	
6 June	Felbridge Village Hall	Annual Room and Storage Rental Fee	£353.00	-353.00	
6 June	Payroll	Salary/Tax/NI	£1396.94	-1396.94	
6 June	WR Hazeltine	Bus Shelter Cleaning May	£45.00	-45.00	
6 June	Clerk	Office Expenses (inc Microsoft 365	£136.94	-136.94	
7 June	NEST	Pension	£191.92	-191.92	
		Sub-Total	£2498.23	-2498.23	
				£27700.76	£25441.57
		Transfers	Nil		
		Carried Forward		£27700.76	£25441.57
		Bank Balances		£27700.76	£25441.57
30 June	Available Funds - Current a/c plus Deposit a/c			£53142.33	
30 June	Allocated Reserves - CCTV £2K, bus shelter £6K, playground £15K, skateboard ramp £2k) includes restricted use CIL revenue			-£25000.00	
30 June	General Reserve (available funds - including budgeted expenditure - minus Allocated Reserves)			£28142.33	
Current Account statement was circulated to councillors on 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024, along with the above record of receipts and payments, for transparency and confirmation of accuracy					

(ii) **First Quarter 2024-25 Budget Review:** Councillors noted the budget v expenditure review for the first quarter which showed that there had been no major variations in expenditure against budget.

(iii) **Skateboard Ramp Repair:** TDC have said that insurers will cover the cost of repairing the skateboard ramp. **Resolved:** Councillors consider it necessary for the repairs to be carried out asap to avoid further damage and to ensure that his popular facility is available before the start of the school holidays. **Action:** Cllr. White to follow up with TDC.

(iv) **External Audit:** Audit documents have now been submitted to the External Auditor.

## 6. VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

(i) **Grass Cutting:** While the first Urban cut by the Surrey Highways contractor took place at the end of April, the scheduled Rural cut has still not taken place. The Clerk has reported this and asked when the cuts will take place. The website for recording grass cuts has not been updated. **Action:** Clerk to report back.

## 7. COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

- Vehicle Activated Signs: Cllr. Steeds and the Clerk met with a Surrey Highways officer to review the three VAS locations in Felbridge. She has allocated funding to replace, repair and update VAS in the Lingfield Division and this will include sufficient funds to replace the VAS on Crawley Down Road near Rowplatt Lane which was damaged in a car accident in October 2022. The officer recommended second VAS on Crawley Down Road facing the other direction located near the Football field. **Action:** Clerk to monitor. If funds allow, the VAS on the Copthorne Road will also be replaced. The VAS on the A22 remains on their longer term replacement schedule although a speed survey may be required before replacement since this is in a 40mph speed limit area.

- Cllr. Steeds is meeting Surrey Highways officers with Cllr. Clarke on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July regarding the MSDC SA20 site application for 550 dwellings and a care facility off Imberhorne Lane.
- Highways have repainted lines on main roads across Surrey.

## 8. **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT**

- Cllr. White attended a recent meeting at Felbridge Cricket Club with Cllr. Steeds. The club are fundraising to build a new pavilion at an estimated cost of £1M. The intention is for other local groups and clubs to be able to use the new facility for a range of activities for local residents.
- Following a request from a resident, Cllr. White arranged for TDC to provide new bins in the Effingham Road area.
- The A22/A264 Corridor Project working party meeting has now been delayed to September.

No report was received from Cllr. O’Riordan

## 9. **COUNCILLORS’ REPORTS/UPDATES**

**Footpath on Crawley Down Road:** Cllr. Lea has reported to TDC that trees on the grass verge are overhanging the footpath and causing an obstruction.

**A22 Footpath alongside Whittington College:** Cllr. Groom reported that overhanging trees were obstructing the footpath.

**Footpath 286:** Cllr. McBryde reported that this footpath leading from Birch Grove on the Copthorne Road to the A22 at Whittington College has been cut back following a request from Cllr. Huntington.

**Footpath 268:** Damaged and broken stiles have been reported

**40mph Sign on A22:** Cllr. McBryde reported a damaged sign at the start of Woodcock Hill and Surrey Highways have confirmed that it will be repaired.

**TDC Street Clearing:** Cllr. McBryde reported that TDC quickly removed a dead deer from the grass verge alongside the A22.

**Hedgecourt Lake Area:** Cllr. McBryde raised concerns regarding two damaged bins in this area. **Action:** Cllr. White to request replacements. There are also areas with benches which are inaccessible due to overgrown vegetation. **Action:** Clerk to get a quote for clearance and to try to locate the landowner to cut back overgrown hedges at the same location.

**Dog Bins by Felbridge School/Village Hall:** Following a report by Cllr. Hall, the Clerk has checked and both bins need to be replaced. One is rusted badly and unstable and the other has been hit and the lid no longer closes. **Action:** Clerk to send photographs to Cllr. White who will ask for replacements.

**Tree on Verge by McIver Close:** Following Cllr. Lea’s report of trees overhanging the footpath near McIver Close, the Clerk as reported that vegetation from McIver Close to the Village Hall is obstructing the footpath and needs to be cut back.

## 10. **SURREY HIGHWAYS/RIGHTS OF WAY/TDC**

**Limes Pond Clearance:** TDC have still not scheduled this work.

**Graffiti on Shelter:** Still awaiting cleaning team.

## 11. **PLANNING**

### (i) **Applications in Felbridge**

**Applications considered at the Planning Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June**

**DM/23/2699 Land South and West of Imberhorne Upper School, Imberhorne Lane, East Grinstead**

Hybrid planning application seeking 1) outline planning permission for a mixed use development comprising up to 550 dwellings (use class C3); a care village of up to 150 dwellings (use class 2); land for a two form entry primary school (including early years provision and special needs education provision); mixed use neighbourhood centre; allotments; landscaping and sustainable urban drainage and 2) full planning permission for playing fields, new sports pavilion and running track associated with Imberhorne Secondary School; a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) with associated car park, access from Imberhorne Lane, internal road to the SANG and associated landscaping and infrastructure.

(Additional/amended information and plans received 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024)

**Resolved:** Felbridge Parish Council objects to this application. Whilst it is accepted that development of this site has been agreed in principle by the adoption of DPD Policy SA20 following the examination in public, Felbridge Parish Council does not believe that the development proposal as submitted meets the criteria necessary for the application to be considered viable.

The inspector's amendment to Policy SA20 requires that the traffic impact from this site is mitigated '*by maximising sustainable transport enhancements; where additional impacts remain, highway mitigation measures will be considered*'. This requires the Sustainable Transport Plan to have been completed and the mitigation that will be delivered calculated such that the necessary highway mitigation measures can be quantified. The current proposal is based upon a detailed draft travel plan with a suggested target of a 10% reduction in baseline vehicle movements, subject to this target being revised and agreed with WSCC following the baseline surveys. How can the necessary highway mitigation methods be understood if that target is not agreed prior to Planning Approval? We also note that the report on 'A22 and A264 Corridor Feasibility Study' presented to the TDC Planning Policy Committee on 16 November 2023 specifically states that (para 14); *Prior to the conclusion of this work, any planning applications in and around the corridor will need to demonstrate they can mitigate their own transport impacts*

Therefore, this site must mitigate its transport impacts and cannot rely upon any element of the corridor project. There is still the potential that the Corridor feasibility study will not be able to identify a deliverable solution to the Star junction. West Sussex Highways response to the DPD consultation was '*The DPD should acknowledge the possibility that improvements may not be deliverable at the Felbridge junction.*' So even the Highway Authority is questioning the viability of delivering the junction improvements. Thus, S106 funding is not necessarily going to be able to mitigate the traffic generated as the development of sites SA19 and SA20 could proceed, whilst Sussex and Surrey Highways may decide in the future that no viable scheme exists to really mitigate the already severe road network. This would lead to even more development burdening an already severe road network. Felbridge Parish Council fully supports the East Grinstead Town Council amendment to the East Grinstead Neighbourhood plan that requires Mid Sussex District Council to issue a Grampian precedent condition for SA19 & 20. Should any future planning consent be granted for either or both of these allocated sites, then Mid Sussex District Council guarantee that Section 106/278 legal agreements will be executed prior to consent. This includes an upgrading of the A22/A264 'Star' road junction to provide full mitigation for the existing over capacity of this junction; mitigation to negate the increased capacity caused by the proposed extra 750 dwellings; plus the additional accommodation for 150+ residents of the Retirement Community on the SA20 site. The relocation of Imberhorne Lower School from Windmill Lane in East Grinstead to the site, along with the addition of a two-form entry primary school will also increase vehicle movements for the site. This work is to be completed prior to the first housing occupations of either site mentioned above. Whilst it is stated in the TA that WSCC requested the use of a LinSig model for the Star junction in addition to the existing VISSIM model, FPC believe this is a retrograde step as the VISSIM model has been fully tested and demonstrated to model the interaction between the Imberhorne Lane and Star junctions as best as possible. The LinSig model is not capable of modelling the interaction between these two junctions and therefore cannot provide as reliable a future prediction, this is supported by the TA at para 4.3.10 "*it is more appropriate to use the VISSIM model to enable a more realistic reflection of the operation of the A22 / A264 corridor*". LinSig is also known to have reduced accuracy when applied to junctions operating very close to, or at, capacity, such as the Star junction. We also note that there is no validation of the LinSig model provided within the TA, the queue length cameras are shown on the diagram (TA page 45), but there are no queue length observations reported in the TA and thus no queue length validation for the model. Even with these limitations, the LinSig model still shows the Star junction exceeding capacity (104% 2032 with development v 97% 2032 base case) as a result of this development, with no proposal of how to mitigate this impact. We welcome the updated traffic study (16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024), but are disappointed that it has only provided manual vehicle counts at the Star junction without providing any queue length analysis for the same period. As this junction is already declared by SCC to be operating at capacity, counting the vehicles passing through the junction during a peak hour is not a measure of the demand upon the junction, only the number of vehicles able to pass through the junction in that time period. Any excess demand would be seen as increases in queue lengths and thus without the queue data it is impossible to determine if the traffic demand has actually dropped since the 2019 survey (as the TA suggests), or whether the slightly reduced number of vehicles able to pass through the Star junction during the survey period was due to other impacts such as the performance of the

Imberhorne Lane junction at that time, which would have led to longer queues. There were also emergency gas works which started on 3<sup>rd</sup> April with lane closures at the A264/Crawley Down Road junction and this also closed the southbound A22 turn into the A264, the lane closure notice was extended until 16<sup>th</sup> April and this was widely published on social media. Although the works ended early (late on 13<sup>th</sup> April), it is possible that the very significant disruption (eastbound queues in excess of 1.8km) which had been experienced during the lane closure and the published extension may have caused drivers to seek alternative routes. The removal of the proposed signalised junction from the Heathcote Drive/Imberhorne Lane junction has not been explained or justified in the revised TA. It is currently difficult to exit Heathcote Drive for hours of the day with queues regularly backing up to Garden Wood Road. This situation will be exacerbated by the additional +41% to +50% vehicles (development movements/2019 observed) approaching the Heathcote drive junction along Imberhorne Lane at peak periods. We are also concerned that Heathcote Drive should be protected from 'rat-running' and the proposed development flows indicate additional traffic will be using Heathcote Drive without any proposed mitigation. We are still very concerned that the VISSIM transport modelling has only considered the journey times starting from the junction of Crawley Down Road with Copthorne Road, despite it being currently routine that the traffic queues from about Mill Lane, thus significant journey delays as a result of that queue length growing has been ignored in the analysis. A similar scenario exists on the A22 southbound where the modelling limit is from the Star traffic lights thus ignoring any southbound queue on the A22 north of the junction. This issue was highlighted in the consultation response from Surrey Highways, but no revisions or assessment relating to this omission have taken place. The transport modelling also needs to take account of the SA 19 site and all other committed non-completed dwellings at the time of its baseline traffic survey in the East Grinstead area to ensure that the future state modelling includes the cumulative impact of all of these sites. This has still not been accounted for within the base scenario. Whilst there is now a detailed analysis of the Primary education trip generation, there is still no sensitivity analysis regarding the potential that Imberhorne Lower School does not relocate to the site and/or that WSCC do not build the 2-form entry Primary School upon the site. The transport assessment has assumed that these two school moves will internalise 75% of the school associated vehicle movements and thus significantly reduce peak time traffic in the surrounding area. The developer has no control over the future decisions made by WSCC in relation to education facilities and thus all realistic future scenarios need to be considered in an area where congestion is already considered to be severe by the Highway Authorities. Considering all of the above issues relating to the traffic modelling, we currently do not believe that the application demonstrates that it will fully mitigate its impacts upon the highway network in combination with the already approved local schemes and the associated DPD SA19 site. As such it does not meet the requirement of Policy SA20. We also have concerns that the Inspector for the DPD examination specifically considered this scheme when it had two entrances, one for the residential site opposite Heathcote Drive and another for the Care Community. The proposal now being put forward with only a single entrance for such a large combined usage is highly likely to be a material divergence from the Inspected Scheme. Particularly as the Inspector states in his report how much transport related evidence was put forward and debated, and that this change to a single entrance is highly likely to have impacted upon that evidence. We are concerned that there are no proposals to improve the Imberhorne Lane bridge immediately south of the proposed entrance to the site, there are blind spots in both directions making it difficult to see oncoming traffic before committing to cross the narrow bridge. Moving the entrance closer to this bridge is likely to increase the proportion of traffic that turns south and thus bridge improvements must be considered. The school and community (healthcare) building that is included in the plan, must be protected to ensure that the land must be used for community infrastructure and not be able to transfer to additional residential, if the community plans do not come forward.

#### **Applications considered at the Parish Council meeting**

Cllr. Steeds left the meeting.

#### **2023/1501 Ferndale, Domewood, Copthorne, Crawley, Surrey, RH10 3HD**

**Resolved:** Councillors were very pleased to note that there had been a 20% reduction in the proposed size of this application and now support this proposal going forward.

**2023/411 24 Rowplatt Lane, and Land To Rear Of 24-30 Rowplatt Lane, Felbridge RH19 2PA**  
(variation of conditions)

**Resolved:** Councillors noted that further comments on this application have been made since Felbridge Parish Council's comments were submitted on 7<sup>th</sup> May. **Action:** Cllr. White to ask the planning officer whether this application will be called to the Planning Committee.  
Cllr. Steeds rejoined the meeting.

**(ii) Adjoining Planning which may affect Felbridge**

Nothing which directly affects Felbridge

**(iii) MSDC Development on Felbridge Border**

**Welbeck Development, Imberhorne Lane:** Cllr. Clarke reported that he had been able to provide data on projected demand for school places in the East Grinstead area from WSCC. This suggested that there was sufficient capacity within the existing area making it unlikely that the planned primary school within this development would be delivered. It was noted that this would lead to a marked increase in vehicle movements against the project forecasts since they assumed that residents would be able to walk to the planned on site school.

**Barratt Homes Development, Crawley Down Road:** This application has been called in by Cllr. White. The next Planning Committee meeting was scheduled for September.

## **12. CLERK'S REPORT**

**Branches on Village Green** TDC have been asked to remove them

**Wildflower area on Village Green** Clerk has asked Nick Dance to include in the TDC grass cut schedule

**Basketball Hoop Area** Still awaiting quote from TDC to have this marked up

**Grass Cutting** After reporting Furnace Wood as dangerous due to blocked sightlines, Surrey Highways came and cut the sightlines. There has been no response to the request to swap the urban cut at Haskins (which Haskins manage) with Furnace Wood which is on the rural programme. **Action:** Clerk to chase

**CCTV:** Upgrade will be completed before playground works start

**Woods at Village Hall:** A resident has reported that a large hole has been dug in the woods. This has been reported to TDC who will investigate.

**Rural England Prosperity Fund:** The Clerk submitted an application at the request of TDC for funding to replace the skateboard ramp. They responded to say that the Village Hall grounds are not within their defined rural area. Cllr. Steeds has asked that they reconsider.

**Potholes at Furnace Wood:** Six potholes were again patched w/c 1<sup>st</sup> July. Patching takes place each month.

## **13. BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING**

Nothing in addition to agenda items

## **14. DATES OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL AND PLANNING MEETINGS**

The next full Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September. Planning meetings are scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> July, 1<sup>st</sup> August and 15<sup>th</sup> August.

The meeting closed at approximately 2100.

Patricia Slatter

Clerk to Felbridge Parish Council

[www.felbridge-pc.org.uk](http://www.felbridge-pc.org.uk)

