

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, 4th April 2019 at 7.00pm in Felbridge Village Hall

Present: Mr. Jeremy Clarke (Chairman) Mrs. Bridget Huntingdon
Mr Ian McBryde Mrs Joan Harwood
Ms. Georgina Chapman Mr. Alan Woodroffe
Ms. Jo King
Mrs Patricia Slatter (in attendance)

The Chairman introduced himself and welcomed local residents attending the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – 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 5th April 2018 were approved and signed.
3. **MATTERS ARISING** – None
4. **REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

It is interesting to look back at the Chairman's report from last year, we heard then how the condition of our roads was deteriorating but with reduced funding only the severest faults were being repaired. We also heard that we had sought to secure some of the central government funds for road repairs which we requested to repair Crawley Down Road. We were successful, but without adequate explanation Surrey Highways have repeatedly postponed the repairs despite them being externally funded.

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. I reported last year the adoption of the Mid Sussex District Plan which meant 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. However, despite the Sussex side of the border being designated 'an area of development restraint' MSDC have recently approved the development behind 11a Crawley Down Road, which already had approval for its entrance into Surrey. The other two applications, one accessed from 12 Copthorne Road and adjoining the site behind 11a Crawley Down Road and the 63 houses behind the St. John's Ambulance site were both approved by MSDC but the access into Surrey has gone to a Public Appeal. The appeal centres around the impact of additional traffic on the already severe Star junction. Despite restricted funds, Tandridge District Council commissioned their own 3 day traffic study which showed very severe congestion contrary to the 1 day transport studies provided by the developers. The appeal is being held at the Council Offices in Oxted on 14th-16th May. The Public are invited to attend as this is an opportunity to show the Inspector that the Public are concerned about these developments. 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 again by MSDC and is now going to appeal.

The major planning strategy in Tandridge has been the Garden Village for which they have selected South Godstone as the preferred location. Their intention is to meet their housing targets by building a Garden Village which includes local infrastructure as part of the design, rather than lots of smaller developments that fall short of the number of houses needed for the developer to build the infrastructure. The Parish Council has continued to be concerned that major development anywhere on the A22 will have further detrimental impact on the Star junction. The District Plan identifies junction improvements are necessary but is seeking Central Government funding for that project rather than making it a necessary pre-requisite for the Garden Village.

As a result of the inconsiderate parking of contractor's vehicles at the end of Crawley Down Road, the Parish Council had got agreement over a year ago for double yellow lines to ensure a safe clear distance is maintained close to the junction. Whilst it has been a long time, I am pleased to say that the lines have now been installed.

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 over £7,000 to support improvements, Tandridge received £40,000 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 footpaths alongside the roads and are replacing the footpath gate next to Birch Grove. With reduced funding at both County and District level, the services provided by those bodies are being reduced and the Parish Council will use CIL funds where possible to maintain and improve the Village when central services such as grass cutting are reduced. It is still hoped 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 also used CIL funds to provide the memorial bench on the Village Green to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War 1. I was so pleased to see over 100 people at the Commemoration Service, and that the bench is being regularly used since then.

The Parish Council has given financial support over the last year to Neighbourhood Watch, First Responders, St. Catherine's Hospice and the Felbridge Lunch Club. 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. On a lighter note, the repeated chasing by our Clerk finally resulted in the removal of the damaged Phone Box outside Birch Grove. With the imminent replacement of the gate, accompanied with cutting back and tidying up that entrance and footpath, we will improve the visual amenity of the area.

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.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm,

Patricia Slatter
Clerk to Felbridge Parish Council

