

FAIRFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **FAIRFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held in Fairfield Community Hall, Kipling Crescent, Fairfield on Thursday, 8 August 2013 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor B E Dack (Chairman)
P Daffarn (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs V C Batten
C Bidwell

Cllrs N P Hanks
P Mitchinson

Officers in Attendance: Mr L Manning – Interim Parish Clerk (Central Bedfordshire Council)

Others in Attendance: PCSO L Antoine – Biggleswade and Shefford Area Local Policing Community Team (Bedfordshire Police)

FPC/13/56 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G H Smith and Ward Members Councillor B Saunders and Councillor G Clarke.

FPC/13/57 Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interest were received.

FPC/13/58 Council Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of Fairfield Parish Council held on 11 July 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

FPC/13/59 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

FPC/13/60 Parish Crime Update

PCSO Lisa Antoine of Bedfordshire Police introduced herself to the meeting.

She then submitted a verbal summary of recorded crime within the Parish for the period 11 July to 8 August 2013. Members noted the incidents which had occurred and then thanked the Police for their contribution towards securing the removal of local residents who had been responsible for drug dealing.

PCSO Antoine advised Members of the problem which had arisen with regard to cars being abandoned in the local Tesco's car park. Following discussion the Chairman and Councillor Hanks undertook to investigate the ownership of the land on which the car park stood.

NOTED

the Bedfordshire Police report.

FPC/13/61 Appointment of Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer

The Chairman provided background information on Mrs Katrina Henshaw, including professional experience and qualifications, in support of her appointment to the post of Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer.

With regard to the provision of equipment for this post the Chairman stated that Mrs Henshaw had requested that the Council supply her with a laptop. She already had a printer and copier though the latter was relatively slow. The Chairman suggested that, as the Community Hall lacked a copier that could be used, consideration be given to purchasing a fast, second hand machine from a specialist shop in Langford for the Clerk's official use.

The Chairman also suggested the provision of a mobile phone through which the Clerk could be contacted on Council business and a corporate prepaid card to the value of £100 to pay for any stationary needed.

Discussion followed on the above.

RESOLVED

- 1 that the appointment of Mrs Katrina Henshaw as Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer be confirmed;**
- 2 that the Council purchase a laptop, including Microsoft Office software, to the approximate value of £550, for use by the Clerk;**
- 3 that consideration be given at the September meeting of the Council to providing an accounts package on the laptop if the Clerk feels that this additional software is necessary for her to perform her role;**
- 4 that the Chairman discuss with the Clerk the provision of a mobile telephone with basic facilities, and with a publicly available telephone number, to enable the latter to perform her role;**
- 5 that the telephone be obtained on a contract agreement at a cost of approximately £10-15 a month and the Chairman advise the Clerk**

of the budget available;

- 6 that the Chairman be authorised to purchase a cheap, fast second hand photocopier for use by the Clerk;
- 7 that the location of the photocopier be considered at the September meeting of the Council;
- 8 that the Clerk be issued with a corporate prepaid card from the Unity Bank Trust to the value of £100 to pay for any stationary needed for her role;
- 9 that the Clerk update the Council of any purchases made and advise of any further requirements that she has in her official capacity at the September meeting of the Council.

FPC/13/62 Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Member Report

The Chairman advised that there was no Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Member report.

FPC/13/63 Planning Committee Report

The Chairman acknowledged that the Planning Committee's decisions were not being reported to Council to be formally recorded as they should be. He also acknowledged that both he and Councillor Bidwell should have submitted a report to Council on the outcome of their attendance at Central Bedfordshire Council's Development Management Committee on 19 June when they had presented the Parish Council's objections to the retrospective planning application for 6 Shaftesbury Drive (change of use of store and lobby adjoining detached garage and annexe over detached garage from ancillary residential accommodation to separate self contained residential accommodation).

In connection with the above Councillor Bidwell informed the meeting that, whilst a number of members of the Development Management Committee had expressed sympathy for the Parish Council's objections to the proposed change of use, they were also aware that they lacked any planning basis on which to refuse the application. The Chairman explained that the property had six parking spaces in addition to the garage and this was sufficient under Central Bedfordshire Council's parking policy to permit the conversion. He pointed out, however, that the change of use had been made personal to the applicant and, should he vacate the property, the garage would revert back to its original function. The Chairman also stated that David Lamb, Central Bedfordshire Council's Development Management Team Leader East, had acknowledged that, in the light of this application, the Council's parking policy required review.

In connection with a similar planning application for 25A Dickens Boulevard (conversion of an integral garage into a habitable room) Councillor Mitchinson reported that Ward Member Councillor Clarke had stated that she would call this item in for consideration by the Development Management Committee.

The Chairman stated that the new Clerk would place planning applications on the Council's agendas so that Members were aware of them and any associated issues. Councillor Mitchinson and the Interim Parish Clerk undertook to transfer all planning papers that they held to the new Clerk once she had taken up her post.

NOTED

the report on planning matters.

FPC/13/64 **Localism Meeting**

The Chairman reported on the outcome of a meeting on 6 August between himself, Parish Councillor Mitchinson, Central Bedfordshire Councillor David Hopkin, the Council's Lead Member for Localism, and Peter Fraser, Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement, also of Central Bedfordshire Council.

The Chairman stated that the meeting had been highly informative and, further to discussions at the last Parish Council regarding the possibility of adopting a Neighbourhood Plan for Fairfield (minute FPC/13/54 b refers), he was now aware of the advantages and disadvantages of adopting such a Plan. He explained that the Plan would have full legal status as a formal planning document. However, it would also take approximately two years to prepare, would be resource intensive and require local approval through a referendum. The consensus was, therefore, that it would be best to start by adopting a Fairfield Local Plan. This had no legal status as such but could act as the base for the later development of a Neighbourhood Plan if this was felt necessary.

Councillor Mitchinson stressed that Neighbourhood Plans were not designed for the relatively low level needs of the Parish Council and a Local Plan would be more relevant. The Chairman concurred and gave his support for the adoption of a Local Plan.

RESOLVED

that the preparation and adoption of a Fairfield Local Plan be approved.

FPC/13/65 **Town and Parish Council 'Planning' Conference – Post Conference Report**

NOTED

the post conference report on the Town and Parish Council 'Planning' Conference held in April 2013.

FPC/13/66 Quarterly Meeting with Representatives

Members considered the possibility of holding quarterly meetings with representatives of the Hall, Middlemarch and Park resident's associations and/or companies with the aim of achieving continuity and the discussion of mutual concerns. The Chairman stated that there was no immediate requirement for such meetings though issues were emerging.

RESOLVED

that further consideration of this item be deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

FPC/13/67 Changes to Local Bus Services

The Council received a letter from Paul Dodge, the Public Transport Manager for Central Bedfordshire Council, advising of changes to local bus services with effect from 9 September 2013. The Interim Parish Clerk also circulated a copy of a later email from Mr Dodge which included information on additional bus service changes.

RESOLVED

that the information supplied by Central Bedfordshire Council on the forthcoming changes to local bus services be included in 'Fairfield Matters'.

FPC/13/68 Section 106 Agreement – Transfer of Land

Further to minute FPC/13/49 of the last meeting Members considered the response received from the P J Livesey Group Ltd to the Council's letter regarding the possible transfer of land. The Chairman stated that, unfortunately, both of the Central Bedfordshire Council officers who were aware of the background to this matter were on leave. He therefore suggested that either a decision on this matter be deferred until the September meeting or authority be delegated to him to prepare a reply, in both cases following consultation with the officers.

The meeting was aware that both Hotbed Investments and Eyre and Johnson were yet to respond to the Council's letter.

RESOLVED

that further consideration of this item be deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

FPC/13/69 **Correspondence and Other Matters****a Correspondence**

Members noted that, due to the Council's workload, it had not been possible to include correspondence which had been received from Victim Support (Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Division), the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel and Central Bedfordshire's Draft Equality and Diversity Strategy on the agenda.

NOTED

that the correspondence received from Victim Support (Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Division), the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel and Central Bedfordshire's Draft Equality and Diversity Strategy will be considered at the next meeting of the Council.

b Nuisance Parking on Roads – Parking Restrictions

Further to minute FPC/13/27b the meeting discussed the introduction of parking restrictions in Fairfield. In response to the need for a map on which to mark possible restricted parking areas the Chairman indicated that he could supply a detailed map for this purpose.

c Grass Cutting and Gritting

Further to minute FPC/13/51 Councillor Hanks updated the meeting on the failure by Central Bedfordshire Council officers to respond to his enquiries regarding grass cutting and gritting provision in Fairfield and that, as a result, he had lodged a formal complaint.

d Interim Parish Clerk

This being the last meeting that the Interim Parish Clerk would attend (following an appointment to the post of Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer) the Chairman, on behalf of the Council, thanked Leslie Manning for his work as Interim Parish Clerk and expressed appreciation of his contribution. He also thanked Central Bedfordshire Council for providing this valuable service. In response Mr Manning thanked the Members for their praise and wished the Council well.

FPC/13/70 **Date of Next Meeting****NOTED**

that the next meeting of Fairfield Parish Council will be held on 12 September 2013.

Meeting finished at 8.21 p.m.

GPC/12/1