

# FENSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council

held at Fenstanton and Hilton Primary School, School Lane on Thursday 11 July 2019 at 19.30

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**Abbreviations** : CCC – Cambridge Country Council;; HDC – Huntingdon District Council; DC – District Council; Cllr – Councillor; PC – Parish Council; FPC – Fenstanton Parish Council; FVHT – Fenstanton Village Hall Trust

### Present

Cllr Kent            Chairman  
Cllr Ferrier        Vice Chairman  
Cllr Collison  
Cllr Hayes  
Cllr McGee  
Cllr Mitchell  
Cllr Pryke  
Cllr Turner

### In attendance

Annette Eggett – clerk  
Cllr Bates  
4 members of the public including Martyn Crawshaw (MC) and Jane Blunt (JB) (FVHT)

#### 19.223    **Apologies for Absence.**

Cllrs Caswell, Henderson, Saunderson, White, Davies, Dickinson and Mead.

#### 19.224    **Public Consultation**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 19.02.

#### 19.224.1    **Neighbourhood Plan vs Parish Plan**

Martyn Crawshaw (MC) had kindly agreed to attend and talk through a Neighbourhood Plan vs a Parish Plan. He had read through the large document covering a Neighbourhood Plan and felt all councillors should if they can spend some time reading this. He felt it was well written and that HDC had good technical authors. However he felt the phrase 'pathway to sustainable growth' was misleading. The one major advantage to having a Neighbourhood Plan was a 66% increase in CIL received but the process is overly long, complex and puts many PC's off for that reason. It had to be compatible with Huntingdon's local plan and not reproduce any of it. There was the possibility of a real influence of new housing developments in the Parish with the possibility of encouraging or discouraging large developments beyond 2016. He urged the PC to develop a Parish Plan instead for which there is assistance and funding available from HDC. A Parish Plan can include a list of assets and protect trees and buildings and MC suggested discussing all options with Andy Moffat at HDC.

Cllr Kent reminded members that there were concerns in different areas about relations with HDC which would be covered further on in the agenda.

MC pointed out that there was a good section on CIL in this with clear definitions and a section on transport links ie support for bus services. Fenstanton is one of seven key services villages and must push to get the maximum out of this if possible. Cllr Kent felt the PC should look at working in conjunction with other villages wherever possible. Cllr Mitchell suggested developing the foundation of a Parish Plan (no CIL benefit) and to use this as a base, if confident about relations with HDC, for a Neighbourhood Plan. The PC strategic plan had already been started with input from community groups and he believed now would be a good time to start this draft. There were grants and help available from HDC which should be looked into.

**19.224.2 Morris Homes**

MC had raised a note to help the PC when writing to HDC about the problems with the Morris Homes situation. He had added to this the loss of ditches and trees in Conington Road. All plans had shown the retention of shrubbery and hedges; these have all gone and HDC tree strategy has been ignored.

Cllr Kent confirmed the PC would be writing to the Chief Executive of HDC about this; MC was happy to do more research. Cllr Ferrier asked MC if he would help with a Parish Plan if relations with HDC improved; MC confirmed he would consider.

**19.224.3 Allotments**

A member of the public complained that he had not had any update from the Clerk on allotments however there was no update to be had since the last time this was discussed; the PC had heard no news until recently. A second member of the public who ran the allotments had been in touch with Cllr McGee and would remain in touch for all updates. Cllr Kent explained that the PC had met with the Diocese to discuss their recent proposal but had confirmed it was not acceptable and that the PC would not let this subject drop – it understood many allotment holders had concerns and local farmers would be involved in all discussions about how to retain allotments. He continued that matters with the Diocese take a very long time to be resolved but the PC would fight the corner of the allotment holders. He asked that the allotment holders be asked to remain calm as new plans would be received and HDC would be contacted also.

MC pointed out that the 2036 local plan identifies this area for expansion however Cllr Kent clarified that land there can only be released if the Diocese get planning approval from HDC and that applied to both sides of the A14.

Cllr Turner asked if the allotment holders were organising a meeting or petition; it was confirmed that so far only a steering group had been organised.

**The Chairman reopened the meeting at 19.23.**

**19.225 Declarations of Interest – none**

**19.226 To approve the minutes** -13 June 2019 already circulated

These were approved.

**Proposed : Cllr Pryke**

**Seconded : Cllr Hayes**

**Vote : all in favour**

**19.227 Matters arising from the minutes – for information only**

**19.214. MUGA**

Cllr Mitchell confirmed that an application for funding had been submitted to the A14 Highways Fund and a reply should be in within a week.

**19.212.2 Greens signage**

Cllr McGee confirmed the new signage had been ordered.

**19.228 Fenstanton Village Hall Trust** – Jane Blunt (JB, Chair FVHT) in attendance to discuss the possibility of applying for a Parish Council grant later in the year to meet solicitor's bills involved in protracted dealings with Morris Homes. The following points were made during discussions:

Cllr Kent confirmed that the PC had recently decided to offer support to the FVHT and recognised the chequered history of this project. JB told members that during meetings with James Abbott – land director of Morris Homes – the transfer of land under S107 was so badly written that all negotiations had proved very difficult. The land was on offer, but not to be handed over necessarily. JB felt Morris Homes were using this as a lever and setting conditions that the Trust couldn't meet (it is a charity). Cllr Mead had suggested asking for a conditional contract and working on this at the moment. JB had a list of all correspondence as this was an HDC requirement as well as a list of expenses the Trust's solicitor has run up; these had amounted to £2,986 since January. JB had asked

for a reduction as the Trust was a charity but no reply received as yet. She pointed out that if the Trust could get a conditional contract it would save a year and it could go forward and get planning permission however the Trust would still have to apply for this as Morris Homes won't hand the land over as they still own it. The Trust was meeting with James Abbot in the week following this meeting and this would be the first meeting for two years. Cllr Ferrier felt Morris Homes may be interested in a conditional exchange. The Trust could then go out for funding. Morris Homes had also mentioned making the exchange leasehold rather than freehold. Cllr Kent suggested seeing how that meeting went and reminded members that the PC did not make money awards randomly throughout the year. JB should fill in the grant application forms regardless. Cllr Ferrier asked JB how much the fund had in the bank; she confirmed £215K in savings accounts but that was for the building of the hall.

**19.229 Neighbourhood Plan** – see above

**19.230 Representatives Reports** – depending on attendance

**19.230.1 District Councillors** – none present

**19.230.2 County Councillor**

Cllr Bates made the following points:

#### **A14**

There was a possibility that the new road may be open early (December) and with new traffic on the new road it was hoped the situation with lorries on the slip road would cease. There was still work to done on the old road which would become the local road. There was some discussion about the Spittals interchange and the reconfiguration of Huntingdon station.

#### **Cycleway**

There had been confusion about a recently circulated planning letter about the cycleway (converting the track from a footpath to a bridleway). Cllr Kent felt this had been unfortunately mishandled as he had been talking to the Fen residents and some landowners to keep them consistently in the loop on developments. He had agreed with CCC that the PC would be open with residents but the letter was issued without any notice. There had previously been much positive feedback from the residents and the Diocese.

Cllr Bates acknowledged that the feasibility project was ongoing but that the cycle way planning department had sent off this letter. Altering a footpath to a bridleway involved a specialist legal team but there was also a team of 12 which dealt with cycleways. It was hoped that the PC, Cllr Bates and Grant Weller of CCC would meet with residents to put minds at rest.

Cllr Bates confirmed there was no outcome from the recent surface tests.

Cllr Mitchell noticed that on the list recently circulated by CCC of projects being considered the cycleway had been listed and he wondered how general promotion and notifications were handled and how these all linked in. Cllr Bates would check this. Cllr Mitchell explained that this could have a potential impact on other work the PC is doing such as the MUGA.

**19.230.3 Councillors** – if not covered by agenda - none

**19.231 Morris Homes** – update – agenda items: 231 and 233 were linked

Cllr Ferrier reported that he had met with Morris Homes and whilst seemingly helpful they fell back on HDC planning department who are clearing their plans. They had cut down trees which were in perfect condition and unfortunately whatever happens they have been given HDC permission to do this and also the work they have done with the drainage system.

He had also talked to Kier on taking on the piece of land for the Scouts but this is now also tied up with HDC. Cllr Kent and other councillors agreed that HDC takes no notice of the PC. Cllrs Kent and Ferrier also felt that no consideration was given to residents; Cllr Mitchell agreed adding the same situation had arisen over the King Bill pub – he was attending a meeting the week following this meeting and HDC were ignoring all statements by the PC.

All agreed that there were some serious cultural issues to be addressed and proposed that the PC write to the Chief Executive of HDC to set out PC concerns and those of residents including all of the items mentioned - generic concerns, consultations and also specific issues such as drainage, trees, King Bill, and the situation with allotments. Cllr Ferrier had asked HDC to have a meeting to see how it could work with the PC to avoid these situations but it was not interested. The Chairman would write and request a meeting with himself, Cllr Ferrier and Cllr Mead. The letter would request a commitment from HDC to review its policies, attitudes and make changes. Cllr Mitchell proposed a poll which could be worthwhile.

**Proposed : Cllr Kent**

**Seconded : Cllr Hayes**

**Vote all in favour**

**19.232 Allotments and meeting with the Diocese**

Cllr McGee circulated maps from the recent meeting with the Diocese. There were two pieces of land either side of the slip road on the opposite side of allotments that were bigger in size but shaded by trees and which had other issues. The Diocese had suggesting building on Chris Behagg (CB) land however he rented this in perpetuity and he was not prepared to release any land south of the A14.

Cllr Turner mentioned this land had been used for over 90 years and the land on the opposite side of the road would be completely different. Cllr McGee would liaise with Cllr Turner's father who knew of the history of the allotments.

It was agreed the PC would reject the proposal from the Diocese.

**Proposed : Cllr Pryke**

**Seconded : Cllr Hayes**

**Vote : All in favour**

The Chairman added that when a meeting was arranged with HDC the PC would make it very clear that the PC would resist any planning on this land and the PC would need to see a new and different plan. Cllr Bates suggested that the PC should think about where else HDC might consider putting more housing and putting a marker down with HDC that the PC wanted and needed to be made fully aware of any proposals coming forward within the parish borders.

**19.233 HDC Planning – update as above**

**19.234 Ditch clearance / litter picking/grass cutting**

**19.234.1 Ditch clearance / dog fouling**

Cllr Kent reported he had met with CB) to look at Mooresbrook. CB was happy to help but felt residents were not always happy to see him there and the PC must make them aware that work was being done. CB was not however prepared to move rubbish that was not agricultural such as metal work (a skip would be needed for this). CB had reported that he had lost a crop near the cricket club due to dog fouling. He and other landowners were thinking of fencing off their land if action was not taken. Cllr Collison felt people did not always realise what land they were on. Cllr Pryke felt a very strong and blunt notice should be put in Spectrum that not only is dog mess a health risk it is a crop risk. Cllr Kent would work with Cllr Ferrier and CB on a statement for publication.

CB had confirmed that if this could be achieved he would mow FPC footpaths and he would maintain verges and hedges on the cycleway for a nominal charge of £320 - £500 on an annual basis.

**19.234.2 Litter picking**

Cllr McGee pointed out the huge cost of litter picking. Cllr Kent suggested renegotiating with current contractor or moving this to someone else including looking at community help. The litter picking hours would be reduced for now and it was hoped parishioners would help to keep the village tidy. Removal of the litter picking from the contract completely to be considered.

**Proposed : Cllr Mitchell**

**Seconded : Cllr McGee**

**Vote : All in favour**

**19.234.3 Grass cutting**

Cllr McGee was also not happy with the way the grass was being cut (and not collected after cutting). Cllr Kent suggested getting a timetable of cuts from MH. Cllrs McGee and Mitchell to deal.

**ACTION : Cllrs McGee and Mitchell**

- 19.235 Community engagement group**  
**19.236 VE Day 75 celebrations** – taken together  
 The community group had met with other groups using the VE Day celebrations as a catalyst. Discussions were going well and a 3 day programme was being put in place with other PCs. Discussions were also beginning on a children's Christmas party. Cllr Ferrier added that a budget needed to be agreed to make all of these ideas happen but this would be recoverable from ticket sales and sponsorship. The community group would come back to PC with required budget. The Chairman congratulated all on work done so far.
- 19.237 Councillors emails/GDPR**  
 Cllr Mitchell asked who was using the newly set up FPC emails. Very few were and some were not working. The Clerk was asked to arrange a KTS workshop to get this all up and running.  
**ACTION: Clerk**
- 19.238 Operation London Bridge**  
 Cllr Mitchell explained that this was the code for death of the monarch and plans were being established. PC's were being asked if they also wanted to plan services etc in advance and if so liaise with the police. All agreed plans should be made to dovetail with the operation and the police in honour of both members of the Royal family. Cllr Mitchell offered to start on this.  
**ACTION : Cllr Mitchell**  
**Proposed : Cllr Mitchell      Seconded : Cllr Kent      Vote : All in favour**
- 19.239 Sports day report / promotional matters**  
 Cllr McGee reported that although the day had been very wet some good talks with parishioners had taken place and a few volunteers had been gained for Speedwatch. He pointed out that the PC had no banners and no event tent and suggested a small budget is needed for future PR events including promotional material. All agreed.  
**Proposed : Cllr McGee      Seconded : Cllr Ferrier      Vote : All in favour**
- 19.239.1 Community Award**  
 The presentation of the award to the parish postman Geoff Martin had gone very well and resulted in a front page piece in the Hunts Post.
- 19.240 Footpath / matting to outdoor gym/MUGA**  
 Cllr Pryke had looked at the proposed mattings. He recommended changing to an interlocking version which needed pressing down with a roller. He had also spoken to a contact who has a roller which could be used and suggested extending the footpath past the gym to the gate for the MUGA area. All agreed this was a good idea. Cllr Pryke would get a new quote (CIL investment). Cllr Mitchell queried if the interlocking matting would take a digger and / or a truck for the MUGA work; Cllr Pryke confirmed that it would. There was a possibility this could be included in the grant application for the MUGA. Cllr Pryke asked if councillors would volunteer to help lay the matting. It was generally felt this could be achieved and possibly with some community support. Cllr Mitchell would try and link to Timebank. It was hoped a deadline of September could be achieved.
- 19.241 Village signage** – see above
- 19.242 Pitfield Close licence to plant application**  
 All agreed it would good to see this area improved and the resident should be supported although not necessarily monetarily. Cllr Ferrier offered to visit the resident for a talk.  
**Proposed : Cllr Ferrier      Seconded : Cllr Kent      Vote : All in favour**
- 19.243 Christmas Fayre**  
 It was agreed to grant permission for the FVHT to use the triangular area around the Clock Tower on the evening of Friday, 6th December, to host the Christmas Fayre and Lights.  
**Proposed : Cllr Ferrier      Seconded : Cllr Turner      Vote : All in favour**
- 19.244 Finance – to approve payment list - agreed**  
**Proposed : Cllr Pryke      Seconded : Cllr McGee      Vote : All in favour**

- 19.245 To accept notices and matters for the next agenda**  
Pathway from Pitfield to Cranesbrook – currently suffering from dog mess and there is a possible issue of the new top road being dangerous.
- 19.246 Parish matters to note**
- 19.246.1 Signage**  
Ellis Winter's sign needs to be moved from the pavement out of office hours as does Barry's Plaice who had confirmed they would move but had not done so.
- 19.246.2 Codent gas notices**  
These are apparently being dropped into residents' houses with dates but no workmen appear.
- 19.246.3 Chequer Street water pipe (burst)**  
This has been reported already.
- 19.246.4 Hampton Field – seating etc**  
Cllr Collison mentioned that she had recently been at the football pitch when youths had been eating pizza on the gym seats. Cllr Pryke confirmed the PC had benches/tables ready to put in here but he would cost out the possibility of table tennis tables and possible other options. Cllr Mitchell felt there was scope here to do more. Cllr Pryke would chase his contact to get the concrete laid for the benches, hopefully before the next council meeting.
- 19.246.5 High Street closure**  
Cllr Mitchell felt with the closure of the High Street between 29 June and 9 August drivers would be using Chequer Street, Swan Road and other routes. He queried if the PC should be monitoring this. Cllr Pryke felt there was nothing to be done and this was a Highways matter. Cllr Mitchell reported there is a supposed plan for diversions but he felt drivers would not use it – he suggested getting a statement prepared.
- 19.246.6 Dairy Road 30 mph signage**  
This was not a residential area and derestricted. Highways to be contacted

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING ENDED 21.22**