

FARLOW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held in Farlow and Oreton Village Hall on 29 March 2018 commencing at 8pm

Present	Parish Councillors	Geoff Wadsworth Chairman Ann Broomhall Vice Chair John Derricutt Neil Sutton Stephen Andrewes
	Clerk to the Council Lengthsman Unitary Councillor	Derick Bromley Anthony Harman Gwilym Butler

1 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Stephen Jones (holiday) Pete Brown (work commitment) and Madge Shineton

2 **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest**

Councillors were reminded of their obligation to declare any pecuniary interest they may have with regard to **any** item on the Agenda.

3 **Public Open Session**

No members of the public attended the Meeting

4 **Approve Minutes of Last Meeting**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 February were approved

4(a) **Land opposite school-discuss acquisition and means of financing**

This will be a long slow process. The item will be retained on the Agenda

5 **Footpath Group.**

This Item will be delated from all future Agendas

6 **Debate regarding spending of £19,600 on Real estate Conference on French Riviera**

This arose from a headline in the Daily Mail (17 March 2018) entitled ' **A champagne jolly on the Riviera for officials pushing up council tax bills**'. The figure quoted in the article as being spent by Shropshire Council was £19,600. Although Gwilym Butler detailed a figure less than that sum the difference was insignificant and the Daily Mail must have obtained their sum under the Freedom of Information Act.

6 **Debate regarding spending of £19,600 on Real estate Conference on French Riviera (continued)**

This matter was debated, sometimes heatedly, under the auspices of Public Open Session Agenda Item 3 as adjudicated by the Chairman. Whether or not the sums spent were legitimate the questions arose about the validity of the reasoning for attending, by a Local Authority, such a real estate conference on the Riviera in the English winter. This caused anger in view of the recent maximum hike of Council tax and comment was made 'an awful lot of pot holes could be filled with £20k'!

7 **Update on situation of Parish Clerk**

The clerk outlined to the meeting his recent serious health issues and informed the meeting of a number of medical tests which still await final results. Adverse results will obviously impact on his ability to continue. The Chairman concluded this must be kept in abeyance until such time as the outcome of these tests is known.

8 **Defibrillator Acquisition**

The meeting confirmed the issuing of a cheque in the sum of £3,549.60 dated 20 March 2018 cheque number 000593 (which includes vat-reclaimable) in settlement of an invoice for two defibrillators. Discussion then proceeded to agree placing on our web site a Thank You to Richard Williams, The National Lottery and others for their financial support of the project. The final text will be drafted and agreed by The Parish Council in public session.

9 **Unitary Councillors Report**

Gwilym Butler reported as follows;

- i) County has delivered a balanced budget
- ii) More funding from Central Government including £1.86m additional resources to fill in pot holes, Twenty three gangs are working 6 days a week filling in pot holes
- iii) County are refusing to let us have large amounts of tarmac on the grounds of Health and Safety!
- iv) Lengthsmans grant fund is being reduced to £75k for the forthcoming year (from £110k – last year). Will have to be match funded and claims will be based on specific projects
- v) Youth Funding 'pot' has been reinstated.
- vi) During 2016/17 1,910 new houses were delivered in the County of which 447 were affordable
- vii) New care home in Cleobury will be ready by autumn.
- viii) County are looking into 'beefing up' planning enforcement with more stringent policies. Too many applicants are abusing the laxity in the system especially with regard to retrospective planning applications,
- ix) Gwilym was approached about the continuing saga of Larches Lane. He said there was no material reason why this should go to committee. He was advised the current proposal would have a major impact on a neighbour's land. The applicant has 15 acres and is well within their powers to have a siting more amenable to their neighbour.. Gwilym promised to have a further look at this application on our behalf.

9 **Unitary Councillors Report (continued)**

- x) Complaint Hedge Corner has built a wall 6-7ft high. Gwilym thinks this is within their rights. Need to look at Shropshire web site and review planning conditions set when the building was extended.

9(a) **Lengthsman Report**

Anthony Harman reported as follows;

- i) There are numerous pot holes which need filling
- ii) Water problem down Withies Bank-John Derricutt suggested a digger to assist
- iii) Also drainage problem outside Stokes (on Common)
- iv) Trees leaning badly Lane's End to Crossroads
- v) Have to be vigilant when cleaning ditches because of water pipes close to the surface,
- vi) His invoice for£264 (including Vat) was passed for payment,

10 **Highways Monthly Report**

Stephen Jones could not attend the Meeting. Nothing specific to report- The usual moans about potholes and deteriorating road surfaces.

11 **Litter Pick**

This was scheduled for Sunday 8 April-Meeting 10am at Village Hall

12 **Speaker for annual Parish Meeting**

There were two suggestions a) a local historian Dave Poyner and b) Graham Jones on WWI and impact in this area. Neil Sutton and John Derricutt will respectively approach their contacts.

13 **Code of Conduct –Councillor/Clerk Relations**

This new Code will be debated at a future Meeting.

14 **Data Protection Regulations**

This new legislation will be debated at a future Meeting

15 **Planning**

Agricultural Building Larches Lane 17/02689/FUL

This matter has been referred to Gwilym butler for his further advice se Minute 9(ix)

16 **Correspondence**

There was no Correspondence to discuss

17 **Finance**

- 1) The Bank Balances recorded were as follows
 - Current Account £28,944.73
 - 30 day Account £719.02
- 2) The Internal Audit letter was reviewed and the Chairman will sign and return to Charles Metcalfe
- 3) The accounts year to date, previously circulated by email, were reviewed
- 4) This year is the end of the traditional External Audit. Previously accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis (cash basis). This year there will be a large debtor for vat so it will be more appropriate to prepare on an Income and Expenditure basis (accruals). The meeting unanimously agreed to the change in Accounting Method.
- 5) The delay in VAT recovery, in part due to purchase of defibrillators at year end and the IR change in recovery procedure, was discussed and is the reason for the change in Accounting Policy as agreed in 17 (4) above
- 6) Given the pathetic interest rates available surplus funds will be kept in the current account until there is a fundamental change in circumstances
- 7) The Clerks salary/disbursements in the sum of £282.80 (net of income tax) was sanctioned for payment
- 8) A cheque for £115 for income tax due to HMRC was sanctioned.

18 **Donations**

There were no requests for donations this month.

19 **Meetings attended**

No meetings attended during month

20/21 **Rights of Way**

Bridleways

There was nothing to report. Pete Brown was unable to attend the Meeting.

22 **Items to be put on Agenda for next Meeting**

The following items are to be put on the Agenda for the Next Meeting

- Code of Conduct Councillors Clerks.
- Data Protection Regulations
- Potential for purchase of Land opposite School.

23 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next Meeting will be held on Thursday 26 April 2018 commencing 8pm in Farlow and Oreton Village Hall.

The Meeting closed at c10.00 pm

