

# FARLOW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 in Farlow and Oreton Village Hall commencing at 8.00 pm.

<b>Present</b>	Parish Councillors	Neil Sutton – Chair Helena Hale Jim Workman Ian Elwell John Derricutt Emma Gittins Ann Broomhall
	Clerk of the Council	Sue Jones
	Unitary Councillor	Gwilym Butler
	Lengthsman	Anthony Harman
	Parishioners	None

## 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Simon Harris

## 2. Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

Councillors were reminded of their obligation to declare any pecuniary interest they may have regarding ANY item of the agenda.

## 3. Public open session

No members of the public attended.

## 4. Approve the minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last Meeting held on 5th January 2023 were approved and sanctioned to be posted to the website.

## 5. Report by Unitary Councillor

1. Social housing in the rural areas has always been an issue because of the shortage of properties and lack of land supply to build on. There is now a further issue as existing stock, a lot of which is old, maybe not of standard construction is unable to be bought up to a minimum EPC C for energy rating which is now a government requirement by 2025 on Social housing stock and by 2028 on private rented properties. This is having an impact on local housing supply - a social housing provider is selling two houses in Cleobury as the issue comes to a head. This is an issue across the rural county. I also believe the issue regarding private rented housing is a ticking timebomb as new contracts for EPC below C will not be legally allowed post 2028.
2. The Budget will go to cabinet on the 15th February and then on to Full Council on the 2nd March. It is proposing a Council tax increase of 4.99% - the maximum allowed. Obviously with inflation still above 10% and a huge rise in demand for care for Adults and Children, there are major issues for the Council which this increase will not by itself resolve. The Budget, therefore, proposes a further £50 million of savings

through doing things differently (ie more efficiently) and digitalisation – we are looking for more ways to make our funding go further.

3. A submission has gone into the boundary commission regarding Unitary Councillors Divisions. The commission is adamant that there will be no dual member Divisions. Two options have been put in for the current Cleobury Division. One that splits Cleobury town and Oretton/Farlow parish in half (east and west) and has each new Division covering a portion of the town and the parish – the town and parish boundaries will not be affected. The other submission is for a new Division covering Cleobury town and three parish councils from the south/west and then all the other parish councils coming together as a single Division - which is a large rural geographical area. Both options also include removing Wheathill and joining it with Brown Clee Division. The aim is to get each Division to within 10% of 3600 voters, which in our area will be a struggle. We will await the outcome from the submission and what emerges as the preferred option - which will then come for open consultation.

4. From 4 May 2023 voters in England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections, including local elections, parliamentary by-elections, Police and Crime Commissioner elections, and recall petitions. From October 2023 this will also apply to UK General elections. From late January anyone who does not have one of the accepted forms of ID will be able to apply for free ID – known as a Voter Authority Certificate at [www.voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/](http://www.voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/) or by completing a paper form.

5. Proposals for Highways. SC are hoping to bring more work back in-house, rather than Keir. SC taking £6M out of the contract to give to local teams. For example Keir charge a fixed rate of £247 to fill a pot-hole, SC are doing it for £67.

6. Shropshire Council Enforcement Officers will be patrolling Cleobury Mortimer.

7. The streetlight in the Talbot Car Park should soon be working as Western Power have had to re-route the Power Supply. 6 Charging Points will be installed.

## **6. Lengthsman and Highways**

### **Lengthsmans Report**

1. Notice board at The Gatehangs Well will hopefully be put up next week.
2. The sign at the New Inn junction is being repaired.
3. At the junction by the Ford there is an issue with the drain. AH will dig a pipe into the bank and this should solve the problem.
4. AH will drive around the parish and check all of the drains.
5. The ditch by The Mounts. AH will dig out when next passing.
6. The Car Park opposite the village hall needs more stone on it. AH is going to measure and cost the works. Work to be completed in the summer when dry.
7. The Foxholes: There is still an issue with the water across the road. JD and AH will go a speak to the landowner.

## **7. Planning**

None to consider.

## **8. Draft Sustainability Warmth Strategy**

The draft Strategy has three objectives:

- **Raising awareness of the importance of tackling fuel poverty and improving energy efficiency** – cold homes can worsen health problems and contribute

towards excess winter deaths. It is estimated that in 2020 16.5% of households in Shropshire were in fuel poverty.

- **Establishing a pathway to zero-carbon housing** - the Climate Change Act 2008 set legally binding targets to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. It is estimated that it will cost over £4 billion for all Shropshire's domestic dwellings to reach net zero; this includes an estimated £477 million to decarbonise all the county's social housing.
- **Attracting funding to deliver affordable warmth and improve energy efficiency**- the Council provides an energy advice service, which includes provision of energy efficiency measures to eligible households; and seeks to access central government funding for energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures for eligible dwellings.

It is good to see a strategy, but it may be hard to achieve. It will enable Shropshire Council and Partners to tap into funding at Marches Energy.

## 9. Correspondence

None

## 10. Donations

None

## 11. Finance

### 1. Bank Balances @ 09/01/23

Current Account £26,240.45

Business Instant £720.75

### 2. Accounts for Payment

Chq No. 697      D. Bromley April – June HMRC      £67.40

### 3. Precept Requirement 2023/24

1. The revised budget that had been circulated to the Council was discussed. It was agreed to create a Defibrillator Maintenance reserve and to review the Asset register. It was also agreed to limit the grant to the Village Hall to £900 to include the hire of the Hall.
2. It was proposed by NS and seconded by IE that the amount of £5,000 be request for the precept for 23/24. All agreed.

## 12. Meetings attended

HH attended at Carbon Literacy course. Found it very informative. HH will produce a presentation for the Council about things that can be done on an individual and community level. Marches Energy are very helpful.

## 13. Items to be put on agenda for the next meeting

Risk Assessment

Code of Conduct

Financial Regulations

## 14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 in Farlow and Oreton Village Hall commencing at 8.00pm

10.00 pm meeting closed