

Four Marks Parish Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting Held on Wednesday 16th November 2016, commencing at 7.30pm At the Village Hall, Four Marks

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Janet Foster (Chairman) Cllrs Tim Brake, John Davis, Davie Edgar, John Hammond, Kellie Knight, Dave Mills, and Simon Thomas

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs S Goudie (Clerk) 4 members of the public, Cllr Ingrid Thomas, Cllr Deborah Jackson

APOLOGIES: Cllr Anne Tomlinson

16.153 OPEN SESSION

The Chairman opened the meeting and invited the members of the public to speak and raise their concerns.

Julia and Roland Hylden from Telegraph Lane asked for an update on the Benjamin UK homes local situation. District Cllr Ingrid Thomas who was in attendance was able to advise that there are potentially three of these care homes in the Four Marks area, one in Medstead is already in operation. Each of which are allowed up to four children and two carers overnight, which is considered a family unit and therefore not subject to any planning requirements. Cllr Thomas confirmed she had attended several meetings with EHDC Environmental Health and HCC Child Services and the owner of the company was in attendance at the meeting.

In answer to questions, it was confirmed that the children are not from Hampshire, and are unable to enter other forms of correctional facility or homes. Their own local authorities pay Benjamin UK up to £7,000 per month for their care. It is a business not a local authority based facility. They are home schooled. Any disturbances should be notified by ringing 101, and reported on the EHDC website and a follow up safeguarding meeting will be held. The age range is 12-18, one home will be for boys, one for girls, and one mixed occupancy.

Concerns were raised over the excessive car parking during the daytime, both at the existing property and worries over the same at the other properties. Again any obstructions or illegal parking offences will need to be reported as appropriate.

John and Nicky Merrix from Ashdell Farm, Headmore Lane, opposite the golf course. They currently operate a marquee company but are now looking to retire. The company will continue but in a different location. The proposal would be to remove the existing storage facilities and build a new dwelling and sell their current dwelling adjacent to the site and is seeking the Parish Council's support in principle of their proposal.

They have tried to market the site locally for a different commercial venture, but nothing suitable for its location has come forward to date.

Questions.

Would the existing buildings be demolished rather than refurbished? Yes.

What is the current use class order, will you need to apply for change of use? Yes, it is currently B1 and was originally owned by Hampshire Commercials. The building was too small and the site too big, so an application was sought turn the excess site back to garden curtilage and increase the size of the storage building.

Have you sought pre-application advice? No, not yet, their planning advisor, had suggested they speak the parish council initially.

In summary, the Parish Council advised them to now contact the Local Planning Authority for pre-application advice. The site is outside the settlement policy boundary and as such planning permission may not be granted, however the Chairman thanked Mr and Mrs Merrix for making contact with the Parish Council initially, which was gratefully appreciated.

The Open Session concluded at 7.55pm. Standing Orders were applied.

16.154 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Anne Tomlinson. It was RESOLVED to approve Cllr Tomlinson's apology for absence following proposal by Cllr Thomas, seconded by Cllr Knight, and agreed by all members.

The Chairman also welcomed Cllr Edgar back to the Council following his recent unavoidable absence.

16.155 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16.156 COUNCIL MINUTES

- The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on **Wednesday 19th October 2016**, were proposed as a true record by Cllr Tim Brake, seconded by Cllr Simon Thomas, approved unanimously, and signed by the Chairman
- There were no matters arising.

16.157 CHAIRMANS REPORT

- The Chairman advised members that an email had been received asking if the Parish Council would be prepared to offer a site for a clothing bank for breast cancer awareness. It was agreed that, whilst supportive of the cause, there were no logistically suitable locations at any of the Parish Council owned facilities. The Clerk agreed to respond with other suggested locations.
- Additionally the Chairman had received a request via HALC to fly the Hampshire Pride rainbow flag at the end of February to show support of their initiative to improve awareness within the County of Hampshire. It was agreed that Four Marks has an open and diverse community, Agreeing to fly a flag other than the current Union Jack and the Four Marks and Hampshire flags, would leave the Parish Council open to requests from other organisations, agreeing to one would then set a precedent, it was therefore RESOLVED to not take part in this particular initiative.
- Cllr Foster reported on the recent Community Forum event and took part in the Access for All workshop in a bid by the portfolio holder to make areas within the community more accessible for all. Four Marks however was already performing well in this area.
- Both Cllrs Foster and Thomas recently attended the HALC AGM. Cllr Foster was delighted to announce that the Clerk, who had been nominated for 'Clerk of the Year', was the runner up and was presented with a token of appreciation.

The Clerk thanked the members of the Parish Council for their support.

16.158 PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND PLANNING ITEMS:

- The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 2nd November, had been circulated. Cllr Thomas summarised the salient points from the meetings, as below.
 - EHDC Enforcement have dealt appropriately with the removal of hedgerow and other breach issues at The Old Dairy, Lymington Bottom.

- Two letters to the Planning Inspectorate have been sent by Four Marks Parish Council to support Medstead Parish Council with their two appeals this week. The Haven, Boyneswood Road, a very robust defence has been sent for this written appeal. The hearing for the Mansfield Park Appeal is 6th December 2016. Decisions will not be expected on either until the New Year.
 - No appeal has been received from the Blackberry Lane application to date, there are only 5 weeks left until expiration of the appeal period.
- Planning Application; Reference No: 36889/004; Two storey extension to rear; Brackenwood, Swelling Hill, Ropley, SO24 0DA.
No objection, providing the planning officer is satisfied that there are no loss of privacy issues with the new first floor extension windows that may affect adjacent neighbours.

16.159 OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

- The minutes of the Open Space Committee meeting held on Wednesday 2nd November had been circulated.
In the absence of the Cllr Tomlinson, the Clerk detailed the following items of note from the aforementioned meeting:
 - Cllr Tomlinson wished to formally thank the WI for their bulb planting initiative.
 - Tennis. The Tennis Club are currently awaiting the outcome of the Cabinet Grant application, however other issues with reference to the tennis courts would be discussed under the Benians Pavilion Agenda item.
 - Storeys Sanctuary. The Vectis Close gardens were now fenced off and the access to Gloucester Close re-opened. The Clerk asked the Councillors if they knew of any long standing residents that used Storey's Sanctuary as a through route at any point in their earlier lives, for witness statements to support the formal right of way application.
 - It was agreed to replace the timber toddler multi-play unit rather than refurbish, and purchase some new swings for older children.
 - A new bin for the skate park was also agreed.
 - Legal advice was now being sought for the boundary breach by Charles Church, and a 'notification of legal action' had now been sent.
 - Disability Cricket. An exciting opportunity has arisen in that Four Marks were being considered as the home of Hampshire Disability Cricket.

16.160 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 26th October had been circulated.
- The proposed budget had been circulated prior to the meeting, together with a proposed increase in precept of £20,000 to cover the increased open space costs and for the improvements to the Community facilities. The increase was proposed by Cllr Tim Brake, seconded by Cllr J Davis, and approved, by a show of hands, unanimously. It was therefore RESOLVED to increase the precept for 2017-2018 by £20,000 to £105,000.
- The updated Four Marks Child Protection Policy had been circulated for deliberation prior to the meeting. There were no comments on the amendments to the document, Cllr Janet Foster proposed its adoption, seconded by Cllr Thomas and subsequently approved by majority vote with one abstention, and it was therefore RESOLVED to approve the document as a standard policy document, which would be reviewed annually or as appropriate

16.161 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

Both District Councillor's had circulated their monthly reports prior to the meeting and are attached to these Minutes as Appendix 1 and 2.

Cllr Deborah Jackson reported a recent successful venture of inviting local school children to the District Council offices at Penns Place to demystify the workings of local government and generate enthusiasm for voting. They toured the offices then had an enlightening debate on school uniform. The children from Four Marks Primary School were asked their views on Four Marks, the usual concern of 'too many houses' was raised, but also they would like to see more swings and more dog poo bins to encourage people to pick up their dog waste.

The District Councillors also reminded the Parish Council that they still have grant money available for any local projects.

16.162 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk circulated the receipts and payments for the month ended 31st October 2016, prior to the meeting. Following proposal by Cllr Thomas, and seconded by Cllr Brake, it was RESOLVED to approve the accounts.

The current receipts and payments to date were circulated at the meeting and noted.

Cllr Davis reported that he had carried out a quarterly bank reconciliation check in October, as per our Financial Regulations, with no issues to report.

16.163 COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

- **Allotments;** nothing to report.
- **Festival Committee meeting;** next meeting to be held the following Monday. Both the Chairman and District Councillor Thomas asked for their thanks to be conveyed to Festival Committee for the Remembrance Parade and service which was extremely well attended.
- **Footpaths;** nothing to report.
- **Oak Green;** Tenders for the refurbishment works have been sent out, with 31st December deadline. The Christmas tree is going up on 5th December. There have been several complaints about cars for sale being parked at Oak Green, and it was agreed that Highways should be contacted for those on the public highway. Those parked within the Parish Council car park area were being approached by Cllr Foster directly asking for them to be removed.
- **Village Hall;** The District Councillor grant application had been approved and a new cooker purchased and installed.

16.164 BENIANS PAVILION:

- Cllr Knight advised members of the issues that were raised at the Benians Committee meeting the previous month.
 - The grant donation from the Benians Committee to the Parish Council had not been approved and deferred to the following meeting.
 - The preferred option for the expansion project had been voted on, however the Committee had raised the question of ownership of the improvement works. It was confirmed that any improvements made by the committee would become part of the building and therefore under the ownership of the Parish Council. The Clerk agreed to inform the committee accordingly.
 - CCTV. The committee would like to install some CCTV cameras but were unsure what permissions were required. The Parish Council raised a number of concerns; proposed location, how would the footage be viewed and recorded and who would have access to the footage, and would they be vulnerable to damage? It was agreed that before approval was given, the Clerk should request this information.
 - The committee were entering into a contract to provide a card machine payment system, which was now in place.
 - The committee are paying for the refurbishment of the bar chairs rather than replacement.

The Clerk confirmed that contact had now been made with an independent advisor as to the best way forward to cost effectively run the Pavilion and adjoining facilities. It was agreed that the report should be available for discussion at the January Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, with options for proposal at the January 2017 Full Council meeting. The options would be formalised ready to propose to the Benians Committee at their meeting in January, which follows the Parish Council meeting.

It was also suggested that the Parish Council should hold copies of all licences held by the Benians Committee for good practice.

- **Sports and Social Club AGM.**

The Clerk attended the Sports & Social Club AGM the previous week which resulted in the decision to formally dissolve the Club. Although the tennis club membership was the primary income for the Sports & Social Club, it was agreed that as the tennis members do not participate in any events or come to any meetings that the Club should either be disbanded or segregated from the main Committee. The Tennis Club has no committee therefore there is no one looking after the courts and ensuring that they are kept in a reasonable playing condition. The fees are so low that the courts are just being used as a pay to play system. None of the coaches or trainers are paying a separate hire fee, which it was agreed is wrong, as they are being paid for their services. It was agreed that if the fees were raised, more maintenance could be done and this in turn would attract more members. They are also awaiting the outcome of the Cabinet Grant decision for replacement fencing.

James Coles was voted as interim chair to oversee the dissolution of the club or look at other options so that social members will still be able to use the Pavilion itself, and the separation of the tennis club.

Following a recent meeting with a local tennis coach, acting in an advisory capacity, it was suggested only re-placing the fencing to the rear of the courts, and maintenance to other fence areas is really required. The courts themselves were in good condition although the net posts do need replacing. It was also suggested that perhaps a small shelter could be erected next to court 1, where the old building was, to offer those playing and watching shelter from the elements. The potential is there, but they are not being used appropriately, however to move forward a Committee must be formed and by members who are prepared to put some effort in to the effective management of the courts.

The Clerk advised that she was attending the cabinet meeting at the District Council offices the following evening for the grant decisions and it was agreed that the future of the club would be discussed once it was known whether the application had been successful.

16.165 COMMUNITY BUILDING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

No further progress has been made since the last Parish Council meeting, or working party meetings held, since the resignation of Derek Seaton. Cllr Brake had also resigned from the working party and at this stage was not in a position to re-join. It was agreed to defer further discussions on this project until the next Full Council meeting in December.

It was noted that the current members of the group had considerable expertise and Cllr Thomas agreed to speak to Mr Hall to see if they are happy to continue in the same format, with a Parish Council representative to be appointed in due course. It was agreed that a small amount of progress had been made and that it was vital to continue and not let the project come to a standstill.

16.167 CURRENT ACCOUNT

The Clerk had advised the members that to move forward with internet banking a new account would have to be set up, TSB were not able to transfer our details onto an upgraded account, and following proposal by Cllr Brake, seconded by Cllr Thomas, and approved, it was RESOLVED to change

banking provider. It was agreed, following several recommendations, to pursue opening a current account with NatWest.

It was also RESOLVED due to the extremely low rate of interest to move the Deposit account from TSB to Nationwide as they were currently offering the best rates of interest and the Parish Council has a duty to ensure the best return for the money held on their parishioners' behalf.

16.168 HCC SPEED LIMIT CONSULTATION

The proposed speed limit changes currently out to consultation were discussed in detail.

- (i) Gradwell Lane. To introduce a 30 mph limit between its junction with Lymington Bottom and Brislands Lane.
The Parish Council are not in favour of this proposal, whilst acknowledging safety issues with pedestrians, they believe imposing a speed limit could be more problematical in the long term.
- (ii) Brislands Lane. To extend the 30mph speed limit as detailed.
The Parish Council are supportive of this proposal.
- (iii) Telegraph Lane. To introduce a 40 mph as detailed.
The Parish Council were split on this proposal and whilst acknowledging the speed concerns on Telegraph Lane, concerns were raised that decreasing the speed limit from derestricted to 40 may not have the desired effect.
- (iv) A31 Winchester Road, extension of 40 as detailed.
The Parish Council welcome proposals to extend the 40 as detailed.

The Clerk agreed to respond to the consultation on behalf of the Parish Council.

16.169 NEXT MEETING:

Full Council Meeting

Wednesday 14th December 2016, 7.30pm, Village Hall

16.170 The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.50pm.

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Chairman

APPENDIX 1

District Councillor Report to Four Marks PC: Deborah Jackson

With autumn well and truly with us, it was fantastic to see both Four Marks and Medstead Schools put the dark nights to good use for their firework displays. A week later a similarly large group of some of the same children gathered with other residents of Medstead to pay tribute to fallen of the village, the names of whom were once again read out by my predecessor, Maurice Johnson.

I can at least begin the main body of this month's report with the good news that the appeal at 68-70 Lymington Bottom Road has been rejected and a secondary request for the award of partial costs to the applicant has also been turned down.

There are a further two appeals within the ward awaiting the decision of the Planning Inspectorate sites, both within the south Medstead area to the north of the A31. The first, at Mansfield Business Park on Station Approach, is for the change of use of "commercial" land to enable houses to be built. This hearing will be held at the EHDC offices on 6th December. The second is an appeal against EHDC's decision to refuse permission for 17 new houses (plus 1 replacement = 18) at "The Haven", just north of the railway bridge in Boyneswood Road. I know that both your Parish Councils have submitted strong arguments to the Inspectorate – we now have to await the final decisions.

Access onto the A31 from Lymington Bottom Road has again been disrupted, this time to enable a series of bore holes to be dug to help alleviate the severe flooding of the road south of the railway bridge. Unfortunately it has not been possible to complete the work in the originally indicated time frame, resulting in a further week's closure and traffic having to make its way either along Five Ash Road or Winston Rise/ Station approach.

With the recent wet weather have come more complaints about the amount of mud pouring onto the road, this time from the CALA site. I for one am getting fed up with what are becoming almost weekly wading sessions through the mud to track down the regularly changing site managers; I can only imagine what this is like for those having to put up with the disruption on a daily basis.

It is very much hoped that these ongoing issues, together with the failure to provide the Parish Councils with traffic movement updates and lack of CALA site signage will be addressed as a matter of urgency at the first of the Residents' Liaison meetings. Latest news from Miller Homes (who are setting up a joint meeting) is the offer of a meeting at their site office for a maximum of 10 people, with no more than 2 from each parish and no specific invites to Ward Councillors. I believe that our best option is to accept this date and restrictions (although not the location), if only to get discussions started. Hopefully future meetings will be more accommodating.

Ingrid recently chaired a meeting with residents living adjacent to the William Lacey development at Friars Oak. There is clearly a lot of dissatisfaction, not only with the commenced development at the site and the pedestrian safety measures that have been installed at the bridge. I can only stress once again that the fragile looking footway is only temporary with a separate pedestrian footbridge being the intended permanent solution. Contrary to rumour, it is not a lack of finances preventing the footbridge but the fact that EHDC/ HCC do not own the land on which it would need to be built; obviously the land-owner's permission or sale of a small portion of land needs to be agreed before further action can be taken.

Residents are questioning whether the developers did actually commence works within the allotted time period from the date that permission was granted. This is something that continues to be ambiguous from site to site, and only goes to highlight the points I have already made to the Planning Portfolio holder regarding the importance of making the conditions (particularly around "commencement") crystal clear, enforceable and enforced!

There is not much positive to update on the activities at Benwhyles (Boyneswood Road). The property is being operated by an organisation called Benjamin UK, who, according to their website, provides therapeutic residential care for children and young people. Whilst it is apparent to residents that there are a lot of comings and goings and a large number of vehicles parked both at the property and on drive and on the adjacent driveway, EHDC Planning and Enforcement Officers have indicated that no additional permissions are required. Benjamin UK are already running at least one other similar home in the area and are looking to establish yet another in Telegraph Lane. It seems that these homes take in young people from outside Hampshire, but I am assured that both EHDC and HCC Children's Services have the situation on their radar.

As most of you are already aware, all waste (old) electrical good should be returned for recycling. This initiative was started by the Government but as yet does not seem to be working well. Whilst it is easy enough to have old white goods collected (at cost!) when a new product is purchased, disposal of old equipment that has been replaced by a second hand item is less easy. At present unwanted fridges and freezers cannot be accepted at the waste recovery centres ("the tip") as HCC have a backlog that cannot currently manage. This is far from satisfactory, but EHDC have been advised that the situation is only temporary.

Following from this and the recent reduction in opening hours at the HCC waste disposal sites, at the November meeting of EHDC councillors were invited to debate the topic of "Fly Tipping", something about which we are unfortunately too familiar. Data presented indicated the biggest problem areas as being along the A3 corridor. This was challenged by a number of councillors representing the more rural wards such as ours, where unfortunately too often difficult to dispose of waste can be found littering the sides of the road and bridleways. Steps for trying to reduce occurrences and for trying to apprehend offenders were also discussed. If you know of any particular "hotspots", please get in touch and I will pass the information on.

Later this week I will be meeting a group of year six pupils from Four Mark's School when they visit Penns Place. This is a new initiative that is hoped to break down some of the "mystery" of the Council. Amongst the planned activities, there will be a tour of council offices and the opportunity take part in a debate, followed by a mock vote using a ballot slip and ballot box. I only hope I don't get asked too many tricky questions by our future electors, councillors and maybe even members of parliament!

Deborah Jackson (EHDC Ward Councillor, Four Marks & Medstead)

deborah.jackson@easthants.gov.uk

07484 167743 (*please leave a message as the mobile reception is dreadful!*)

APPENDIX 2

District Councillors report 15th October to 15th November 2016

Ingrid Thomas

This year the sun shone on a large crowd at the Four Marks War Memorial where an excellent service was led by Howard ably assisted by Janet, Four Marks Parish Council Chairman, the festival committee had done another great job in organising this gathering for the village. It is always inspiring to stand outside and sing together as a community with all age groups represented. As we are a joint Ward Deborah went to the Medstead service whilst I went to Four Marks.

As I write highways are busy all over the villages, drainage is being installed on Lymington Bottom Road which one hopes will solve the frequent flash floods that occur there. The work has taken longer than expected due to pipes being found I believe. On the A31 the crossing is finally being installed to enable pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross our increasingly busy road. This crossing will be a silent one as residents have asked for the bleeping to be turned off so as not to create a nuisance.

The diversion for the Lymington Bottom Road closure has been causing problems over a wide area as we struggle with the lorries delivering to two large development sites. There have been many complaints of mud on the road. It appears that neither developer has been washing the wheels of their lorries effectively, this is not good enough. It was agreed before the sites began work that there would be regular liaison meetings as there had been for the Charles Church site which were helpful to all. For some reason both Miller and Cala have been very slow to instigate these meetings and are trying to exclude residents, please be assured we are working to get these meetings started.

At Friars Oak meanwhile the tensions continue but I have been told that work is expected to start in February and we are arranging the first liaison meeting for January which I have been asked to Chair. Opposite the access to the Friars Oak site is the Haven which also applied for planning permission for 18 houses, this was refused by EHDC but an appeal has been lodged so the planning inspectorate will make a final decision probably early in the new year. We really do have enough development sites already!

At the community forum in Alton this month we discussed welfare and access for all, it was run as a workshop and many very useful points were raised. One message that came through very clearly was the need for better signposting to information on what is available in our area. If you have any thoughts on how this should be done please email or call me so that I can try to incorporate your ideas in the plans that are being made.

Several points were made about builders putting in ramps and keeping pavements clear whilst they were working which could happen here in a better way.

Another disabled access point that was raised by two tables at the forum was the need for disabled changing facilities available to the public. On investigation I found that we do actually have adult changing facilities with hoists and lifts in Ladyplace car park accessible with a radar key so this was a good example of the need to publicise our facilities better.

As part of my welfare and healthy lifestyles portfolio I am looking at the issues raised and at ways to aid people to access facilities throughout the district. We now have Janie Millerchip working at Ehdc who has been employed to work on healthier lifestyles. The increasing cost of care could be kept down by all of us living more healthily and making use of our recreational facilities and countryside to keep us fitter longer so able to stay in our own homes.

Whitehill and Bordon has been named as a healthy new town so many ideas are being tried there to enable the community to live in a healthier way. Although we are not starting from scratch nor have the same budget there are lots of things we are doing and could do to promote this idea in our villages. The wildflower walk in Medstead and the adult fitness equipment at Four Marks rec are good examples. Before we all indulge in Christmas it might be a good time to promote trying to walk a bit further, try the outdoor gym, or eat one less chocolate. All ideas are very welcome on how we as a community could improve our lifestyles. I do have some councillor grant money left so could help fund any good ideas that come forward. Please do contact me with your ideas!

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a good New Year to look forward to. I hope you enjoy the company of your friends and family over the Christmas period and look out for those who may be lonely, a smile can make someones day.

As ever if I can help you in any way please contact me

Ingrid Thomas

East Hampshire District Councillor for Four Marks and Medstead

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