

FLAUNDEN PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Monday 8th January 2018 - 7.30 p.m. in the Church Room

MINUTES

Attendees:

Councillors: Vivienne Adams (Chairman), Jill Saunders, Pam Esom, John Newman

In attendance : Jack Debnam (RFO and Acting Clerk) and 5 Members of the Public

1	Apologies for Absence: Diane Wass, Keith Robinson, Dacorum Councillors Stewart Riddick and Gbola Adeleke, Herts Councillor Richard Roberts	
2	Declaration of Personal Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: None received.	
3	Public Questions: Taryn McAleer thanked the Council for funding the cutting of hedges and verges along Birch Lane in the absence of Relic Homes (in Administration).	
4	Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 13 th November 2017 were approved and signed.	
5	<p>Environment (Jill):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Litter Blitz:</i> Agreed the date for the litter blitz would be 24th February subject to Jill confirming this does not conflict with a hiring at the Village Hall and that equipment will be available from Dacorum BC. Jill will arrange posters for the Village Notice Boards and a notice on the Village email system. - <i>Easter Treasure Hunt:</i> £100 budget Agreed. - <i>Grant Application:</i> Jack advised that a grant application had been received from the Village Hall Committee for £3,665 +vat to fund essential electrical work on the security and safety systems at the Hall and to upgrade the existing lighting. It was agreed that the work was required and the application was approved in full. The Chair commented that it had been noticed that the Village Hall Committee had proved increasingly pro-active and professional recently, which gave the PC confidence in supporting them with this grant. - <i>PPP:</i> Jill reported that a return had been made to the Countryside Management Service relating to the work this year, and that she was hopeful that the Parish would receive another grant in 2018. After discussion of the state of various footpaths in the village it was agreed that Jill would request funds for work to repair damage to the unclassified road from the School House leading to the Observatory and to repair damage on Bridleway 1. - <i>Drain near the School House:</i> Jill reported that, after much effort and with invaluable support from John Newman, Dacorum had finally acted to repair the damaged drain next to the School House. 	
6	<p>Planning (Pam):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Holly Blue (formerly Toad Hall):</i> an application had been made to enlarge the front and rear dormer windows at the property. It was observed that the rear windows would intrude on the privacy of the neighbouring property Far Corner, and it was agreed that Pam would convey the council's serious concerns to the Planning Office - <i>Old Chapel, Birch Lane:</i> A third application has been submitted for an extension to this property, now considerably reduced in size in comparison with the original application. Concern was expressed that the Planning Office seemed to be acting unduly harshly with regard to this application and Pam agreed to request an explanation from the Planning Office. The Council agreed that they had no objection to the application. - <i>Land North of Home Farm (Glendale Farm):</i> Pam reported that Dacorum Enforcement team had been asked to visit the site but no action had been noticed. The site remains untidy with rubbish and poor fencing throughout. It was pointed out that the caravan had been removed but the terracing had not been reinstated as required and the entrance to the site had not been restored to its original state. It was understood that a number of complaints had been made to the Planning Office regarding this hitherto attractive part of 	

	<p>the countryside surrounding Flaunden. Agreed that Pam would write again to the Planning Office noting the Councils serious concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Copse Cottage</i>: Application to convert garage to annexe. A decision was scheduled for 16th January. 	
7	<p>Highways (John):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>SID</i>: John reminded the meeting of the history of the SID and the resulting inability of the council to manage the movement between sites and to download traffic data. He has requested a resolution of this and reminded the authorities (Mr P Wright) that FPC has duties of care and safety in the area and that the data was essential. He has strong support from Cllr Richard Roberts in this case. John is still awaiting a response to his aggrieved requests and, if not satisfied, will consider the suggestion made by Diane Wass at the last meeting to initiate an FOI request for the required data. - <i>White Lining</i>: John reported that Richard Roberts had agreed to press for funding for white lining for Birch Lane/ Flaunden Lane. - <i>Grips on the verge passing the Bricklayers Arms</i>: the warden does work in this area but the larger grips farther down the road require heavy machinery to clear them. John will request action from Dacorum Highways. - <i>Kerb damage in Hogpits Bottom</i>: Tom Rodwell asked if permission was required to repair damage to kerbing and verges. John agreed to investigate the chance of requesting Herts Highways to fund this once the above issues had been resolved - <i>Ice warnings on bend at Hollins Hall</i>: Peta Woollett puts out the Danger Ice warning signs at the junction by Hollins Hall and reported two minor incidents in the last few weeks. Peta was concerned that the signs would not be managed should she be away. It was agreed that Peta should leave the signs in place in January or February. 	JN
8	<p>Finance Report (Jack)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Payments and Receipts</i>: Jack provided a list of payments and receipts made since the previous meeting. He highlighted a payment made to R J Pritchard for hedge cutting in Birch Lane and Black Ditch Lane. The former refers to the hedges bordering the land owned by Relic Homes now in administration. As these are unlikely to be cut by the owner, the Chairman took an executive decision to cut the hedges while the cutting was being done on neighbouring properties. The Council agreed to ratify this payment. - <i>Forecast v Budget</i>: a forecast of Income & Expenditure for the year with a comparison against the budget for the year was produced, explained and approved. Jack forecast that the Council will make a surplus of £806 this year subject to decisions to come on spending for Footpaths and Grants (e.g. to the Village Hall Committee). - <i>Provisional Budget for 2018-19</i>: Provisional estimates indicate that the council will overspend £1,011 for 2018-19 after making the following assumptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Discretionary grants will be £1,500 (e.g. Village Hall and S137). o Spending on Footpaths will be £1,350 - Note: Dacorum appear to have moved the SID without a contribution from Flaunden PC and so no cost provision has been made for managing the SID. - <i>Precept 2018-19</i>: Jack reported that the precept has remained unchanged for five years and, although the council is able to continue this freeze due to the level of its reserves, he recommended that it increase the precept in line with inflation. It was agreed that the precept be increased for 2018-19 by 2%. - <i>On-line Payments</i>: Jack requested that the council approve the use of on-line bank payments in future and outlined the protections available with the system. It was agreed to approve use of the system and Jack was authorised to make the required arrangements. It was noted that the Council Financial Regulations would require to be changed to reflect this change. - <i>Procedures</i>: The following procedures, having been circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting, were approved unchanged from the previous year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Financial Regulations. 	JD

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal Audit Plan ○ Risk Assessment <p>Jack advised that these procedures would be published on the Flaunden.com website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Internal Auditor:</i> Ernest Newhouse, having expressed his willingness to continue as the Internal Auditor of the Parish, was formerly appointed for 2018-19. . - <i>Exemption from External Audit:</i> Jack explained changes in legislation following the new Transparency Guidelines that would allow the council to exempt itself from the need to have an External Audit. This recognises the new policies of publishing considerably more information on the web. As the internal auditor is judged to be competent and independent and the external audit has found no material inaccuracies in our accounts for many years, the Council approved the election to exempt itself from and official audit in 2018-19 and future years. <p>-</p>	
9	<p>Clerk's Report (Keith):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No report from Keith who is unwell 	
10	<p>Community (Diane)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diane provided the following report: - <i>Website:</i> Diane has now taken over the admin. of the website /noticeboard and will report at the next meeting. - <i>Dangerous Dogs:</i> Post the last meeting Diane managed to get in contact with Bardyll who asked her to check if the issue was ongoing and if so could people note down the name, make of the car and registration of the people with the dogs and he would be happy to follow up. Residents should e-mail Diane with any details should they see these dogs being threatening again. 	DW
12	<p>AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Baldwins Wood Grants:</i> Vivienne reported that Madge had been delighted to receive her hamper - <i>Baldwins Charity:</i> Jack pointed out that the Baldwins Wood Charity was now dormant and recommended that it be wound up. Jack was authorised to take the necessary steps to do this. - <i>Meeting dates</i> were revised and approved for next year as set out below. 	JD
13	<p>To suggest items for the Agenda of the next meeting. No suggestions</p>	

Meeting closed at 9:00pm

2018 PC Meeting Dates

Month	Date	Time	Venue
January	8th	19.30	Church Room
March	5th	19.30	Church Room
May APM and APCM	18 th May	19.30	Village Hall
July	9 th (if needed)	19.30	Church Room
September	10th	19.30	Church Room
November	12th	19.30	Church Room

Chairman –Vivienne Adams – signed on 5 March 2018