

FARRINGTON GURNEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held at 8pm on **Monday 19th February 2024** at the **Methodist Church, Farrington Gurney.**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: James Wellman (Chairman), Mike Hedges, Margaret Heffernan, Paul Radnedge, Clint Dando, Sally Bown, Andy Jeffery

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Clerk, 3 member of the public

Public Forum – BaNES Local Plan

Over 90 local residents attended where the recently published first stages of the BaNES local plan was discussed. Cllr James Wellman outlined how planning officers had talked in late January to parish councillors about what the proposals for Farrington Gurney would look like. There were be 2 suggested sites, one to the north of the village, one to the south, both sites to hold approx. 500 houses.

The Parish Council had then sent out a survey to local residents, to start a discussion. They had also had an initial meeting with the Duchy of Cornwall, who are the landowner on both sites. BaNES published how they intended to consult residents across the whole council area, including a number of public meetings & displays. Parish councillors pointed out that Farrington Gurney was not included, this was rectified, with a consultation event planned for the 13th March at the Village Hall, in the afternoon.

Phil Wade, a local resident with a professional background in property development, then outlined how the process would work. He explained that this was a very long process & it would be unlikely that there would be a 'spade in the ground' for at least ten years, maybe 12 – 15. BaNES, due to central government rules, would have to build 16,000 houses over 10 years, starting in the 2030s. As 8,000 sites already had permission but not built, & about 2,000 dwellings would be individual or small developments, this would leave about 6,000 sites to be identified, which would be difficult. This would probably be 12 x 500 house sites, as there was a need to build infrastructure to go with housing, which could only happen when there was an economy of scale.

There will be a consultation & options analysis period of at least 2 years & we are at a very early stage. If Farrington Gurney residents want to oppose the plans, then there will have to be compelling planning reasons as to why they should not be located in the village.

There was a discussion about how the decision could be influenced & how, at the initial stages, individual responses to the consultation are as important as a collective voice via the Parish Council.

There is also a proposal to build a solar farm on prime agricultural land, which it was agreed should be opposed.

Comments from residents included:

500 homes seems disproportionate for a small village.

Can we learn from the successful Judicial review taken out by Norton St Philip Parish Council against the then Mendip District council, now Somerset Council ?

What guarantees are there of infrastructure being built ? This didn't happen in Paulton.

This is all Grade 1 agricultural land, which is a small 10% proportion of land, which should not be lost this way.

It was agreed that we are still at an early stage, it is important for the Parish Council to keep local residents informed & that there is still time for thoughtful & collective responses.

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23/24 – 11:131 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOME

Apology from Cllr Dando

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

23/24 – 11:132 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None

23/24 – 11:133 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: Minutes of 15th January 2024 meeting agreed & signed by chairman

23/24 – 11:134 REPORTS

- a. RECEIVED a report/update from the Chairman.
Report on items as they appear on the agenda.
- b. Received from Cllr Morgan (BaNES)
Cllr Morgan reported on Keep Clear signage she has had repaired. Also the discussion about the BaNES Local Plan.
- c. RECEIVED the Clerk's report.
Street lighting – Volker Highways have quoted for a new light on Marsh Lane, there was a discussion about the need for the light not to be at maximum brightness, also there needs to be a cowling to pool the light downwards. The light at the middle of Ruett Lane will be assessed for power supply, hopefully ahead of repair. A light on Ham Lane now also needs to be repaired.

23/24 – 11:135 PLAY AREA

The anti-slip material has been purchased, to be fitted to the equipment. However the weather & equipment will have to be dry before this can happen. The tree that leans has been trimmed by the Duchy, but further conversations are taking place about stability. The moving posts are being stabilised.

23/24 – 11:136 LOCAL PLAN

The discussion took place mainly at the start of the meeting

23/24 – 11:137 PLANNING

There were no planning applications this month. However the Mendip Golf Club are proposing to redevelop their site, which will mainly be in the Somerset Mendip Council area, but access is likely to be via the very limited Marsh Lane.

Date				FG PC	BaNES
Jan 2023	23/04707/FUL	17 Main Street, BS39 6UB	Demolition of garden wall to use garden as a driveway	No comment	Permitted
Oct 2023	23/03709/FUL	Meadow Farm Ruett Lane BS39 6UP	Erection of a single storey dwelling following demolition	Oppose	Pending
Sept 2023	23/02394/FUL	22 Hill View, Farrington Gurney BS39 6UJ	3 bed dwellinghouse incl demolition of existing garage	Oppose	Permitted

23/24 – 11:138 SOMER VALLEY ENTERPRISE ZONE

BaNES have adopted the Local Development Order, despite local opposition, but now have to go ahead with Compulsory Purchase Orders ahead of any work.

23/24 – 11:139 HIGHWAYS

The local Community Speed Watch group are looking for volunteers to continue & expand the work they are doing.

The drain covers on the main road near the Methodist Hall are loose again & have been reported.

23/24 – 11:140 FINANCE

Payments & monthly finance report agreed:

There was a payment made of £88.84 was made to Avon Door & Lock Co, for repairs to the noticeboard, under Chair/Clerk's discretion.

Payee	Details	Amount
Duchy of Cornwall	Recreation ground: Sept 23 – March 24	£108.00
Duchy of Cornwall	Village hall quarterly Mar 24 - June 24	£390.00
Duchy of Cornwall	allotments Sept 23 - march 24	£315.00
Duchy of Cornwall	Recreation ground Sept 23- March 24	£108.00
Duchy of Cornwall	Recreation ground Mar 24 - Sept 24	£510.00
St Johns Church	Grass cutting	£1000
Avon Door & Lock Co	Noticeboard repairs	£88.84

23/24 – 11:141 MEETINGS

A meeting was held with the Duchy of Cornwall, about a number of issues, including the BaNES Local Plan. If any housing was to be built on Duchy land they would insist on a high quality specification.

Meetings are being arranged with members of the BaNES planning team, mainly to build up a good working relationship ahead of what will be difficult discussions.

23/24 – 11:142 CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Cllr Heffernan reported on the recent pollinator event. There were about 70 people taking part, which included guided walks, making seed bomb & lunch.

Work is taking place to secure funding for a community fridge.

We are getting advice from the Royal Horticultural Society from their "It's your Neighbourhood" project

23/24 – 11:143 UPDATES/ INFORMATION FROM COUNCILLORS WITH SPECIAL INTERESTS

Village Hall – Cllr Hedges reported that the village hall has been busy, over 140 attending an Elton John tribute. The boiler has been replaced. The social club has more people attending who used to go to the golf club.

Health – Cllr Bown outlined a number of local health initiatives including measles & mumps inoculation take up, Children's mental health week, alcohol intervention initiatives. Also there are healthy start vouchers for new babies, a 77% take up, but this does mean about 200 women are not getting support via the scheme.

Footpaths – Cllr Bullock; The signpost at Hollow Marsh has been repaired.

Allotments – Cllr Radnedge; The old sign telephone number has been removed. The spring may be the time for getting a skip for a rubbish amnesty, also a tool swap scheme.

23/24 – 11:144 INFORMATION/ ITEMS TO RAISE FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NEXT MEETING

Grass cutting & maintenance at the BMX track

results of the Parish Council's household survey.

23/24 – 11:145 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be Mon 18th March 2024 at Methodist Hall.

Signed

18.03.2024