

Farington Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Lowerfield Community Centre on Monday 2 December at 7.00pm.

Present:- Councillor Shaun Bradbury (Chairman); Councillor Baz Howard (Vice-Chairman); Councillor Michael Green; Councillor Tony Green; Councillor Phil Lawson; Councillor Andreea Oprea; Councillor Karen Walton and Councillor Haydn Williams.

In attendance:- Sue Whittam – Clerk
Councillor Mary Green – South Ribble Borough Council
9 members of the public

85. (24/25) Apologies/Chairman's Health & Safety Announcements

The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury welcomed everyone to the Parish Council meeting and briefed everyone on possible health and safety considerations for this evening's meeting.

The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury advised that the Parish Council needed to consider an Item of Urgent business relating to Mill Street lighting which could not wait until the next meeting of the Parish Council. The Parish Council agreed to consider Mill Street lighting as an Item of Urgent Business.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Michael Green and Councillor Tony Green.

86. (24/25) Declarations of Interest

The Clerk confirmed that written requests for dispensation had been received from all present in order for them to consider the precept up to 31 March 2027 in accordance with Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

Councillor Haydn Williams declared a prejudicial interest in Item 6 Planning, as a member of Planning Committee at South Ribble Borough Council. He advised the Parish Council that he would leave the meeting if any planning applications were discussed, that were likely to be presented to the Planning Committee at South Ribble Borough Council.

87. (24/25) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved

That the Minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th November 2024 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

88. (24/25) Neighbourhood Policing Team Update

Unfortunately, there was no one present from the Neighbourhood Policing Team at the meeting and no current crime statistics available. The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury asked if anyone had anything to raise under this item.

One member of the public said that he had still not received a reply from LANPAC regarding any grants/advice available to help deal with anti-social behaviour. The Clerk agreed to forward a further contact to the resident.

The Clerk advised that she had received a response from the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding the invitation to attend a future meeting of the Parish Council. She informed the Parish Council that the Police and Crime Commissioner was unable to attend a meeting of the Parish Council, but had recently visited all council leaders and MPs for each area within Lancashire, with the plan to maintain regular meetings and therefore advised that if the Parish Council had any issues that do arise, we should communicate these to our local council leader.

Councillor Michael Green said that he was a representative for Lancashire County Council on the Police and Crime Panel, and that latest figures had shown that anti-social behaviour in Leyland was down by 20% and vehicle and cycle crime was up by 1%. The Police operated by using intelligence led data. The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury asked if the information on crime could be circulated to the Parish Council. Councillor Michael Green said there was no reason that this information could not be shared as it was in the public domain.

One resident said that on the advice of the Police, Farington Bowling Club had installed extra lighting and moved some soil to make the area more visible. The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury said that the Asset Management Service at Lancashire County Council were going to provide costings for fencing at the bowling club to make it more secure.

The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury reminded all residents to continue to report all crime as this would ensure that Police resources were targeted to the right area.

89. (24/25) Adjournment for Public Participation

The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury adjourned the meeting for public participation and asked if anyone had anything to raise under this item.

One member of the public asked about the oil and fuel spillages in the River Lostock and if there had been any progress in dealing with this. Councillor Mrs Karen Walton said that Borough Councillor George Rear had been dealing directly with the Environment Agency, and that the issues with pollution had recently been considered by Scrutiny at South Ribble Borough Council.

Councillor Phil Lawson also said he had been in contact with the Environment Agency and they had been using dye to try and trace the source of the pollution. One member of the public said they had contacted the Environment Agency on many occasions and did not receive a response. It was agreed that the Parish Council would ask if a representative from the Environment Agency could attend a future meeting to discuss the issues raised.

One member of the public said that they wished to thank the Parish Council for all the work carried out at St Paul's Play Park, as due to the extensive works

undertaken, the path no longer flooded. They also asked if the hedge at 152 Croston Road, which was an empty property could be cut as the hedge was encroaching onto the footpath making it difficult for parents especially with prams to safely walk on the path. Councillor Michael Green said he had reported this to Lancashire County Council. Councillor Phil Lawson said that he had also reported this to Lancashire County Council and had been informed that the hedge would be cut on 4th December which was welcome news.

The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury thanked everyone for attending and then reconvened the meeting.

90. (24/25) Planning

It was noted that the new Model Farm was up for sale and that the planning permission was attached to the building itself, so no new planning permission was needed if it was sold, unless the owner wanted to change/amend the planning permission.

Councillor Michael Green said that the new hospital earmarked for the area had been announced today which was good news for South Ribble and the Parish Council.

The Clerk reported that there was a £293 fee for the Planning Application for BTR field which she had paid and would claim back from the Parish Council.

There were no further planning issues for discussion at the meeting.

Resolved

That the planning update is received and noted.

91. (24/25) Financial Matters

It was noted that the current bank balance as of 9 November 2024 was £388,751.52. We had received a CiL payment of £54,465.24. We had also received the monthly fee of £50.00 per month from Leyland Albion.

It was also noted that the following invoices had been paid since the last meeting: -

Fairman's (Black Swan Ltd) for accounts £427.50. (Cheque no 1146).

Farington Moss St Paul's Bowling Club - £100 grant for paving flags as part of the grant given for benches. (Cheque no 1147).

Peter Heise Lengthsman wages £1050.00 + fuel for equipment £24.50 = total £1074.50. (Cheque no 1148).

Sue Whittam, Clerk's Salary November £1,494.25 (includes back pay from April – November due to pay rise being agreed by NALC + £293 reimbursement for planning fee for BTR field variation application = total £1,787.25 (Cheque no 1149).

We had also paid bank charges to 8 October £7.40; Monthly fee Croner £315.74; Risk Assessment Croner £660.00; Clerk's pension (True Potential) monthly fee £115.57; British Gas September £545.45 Water bill for BTR field £76.06.

Resolved

- 1) The following outstanding invoices were agreed for payment: -
 - i) Reimbursement to Councillor Shaun Bradbury for benches for use by Farington Moss Bowling Club and asset tags £1,891.64.
 - ii) Lancashire County Council for works on BTR field – CiL monies £8976.00.
 - iii) Reimbursement to Councillor Shaun Bradbury for selection boxes for Christmas event - £330.40.
 - iv) Refill Store for December Parish Council newsletter £430.00.
 - v) Reimbursement to Councillor Michael Green for Remembrance wreaths £122.25.

The Parish Council gave consideration to the budget for 2025 – 2026. A copy of the proposed budget was circulated to the Parish Council, this included the net spend to 30 October 2024 which showed that the Parish Council were on track with their current budget. There was discussion about each heading and it was agreed that the legal reserve column should be referred to as legal fees. It was noted that a lot of work had gone into pulling the information together. It was further noted that Fairmans would be producing regular updates going forward but there needed to be a further meeting with the Clerk and Chairman to ensure that the income and expenditure were logged against the correct headings. It was further noted that the CiL spreadsheet needed updating and the Clerk would obtain the updated information regarding projected CiL from South Ribble Borough Council. The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury gave each Councillor the opportunity to comment on the budget. After further discussion Councillor Michael Green proposed that the Parish Council should approve the budget as now presented, this was seconded by Councillor Baz Howard. All present voted in favour of the budget except for Councillor Haydn Williams who voted against.

- 2) That the budget as presented is approved by the Parish Council and a copy of the approved budget is placed in the Minute Book.

The Parish Council gave consideration to the precept for 2025 – 2026. Taking into account the budget as approved above, the Parish Council were mindful that they did not want to increase the burden on residents. It was therefore proposed by Councillor Karen Walton that the precept for 2025 -2026 should remain the same at £97,120, this was seconded by Councillor Phil Lawson. All present voted in favour of the precept except for Councillor Haydn Williams who voted against. It was noted that by keeping the precept the same, this would result in a small decrease in the Parish Council's part of the council tax paid by residents.

- 3) That approval is given to setting the precept as the same level as last year at £97,120.

92. (24/25) Projects for 2024/2025

The Parish Council considered the following projects: -

St Paul's Play Park Christmas event - update

The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury reported that arrangements were progressing with the plans for the Christmas event arranged for 14th December at St Paul's Park. Councillor Baz Howard said that the elves would need DBS clearance and Councillor Andreea Oprea said that she had clearance and would be willing to help if needed. Councillor Baz Howard had also arranged a banner advertising the event and the information had been included in the December newsletter.

Appropriate risk assessments and marshalling would be in place to ensure that the event ran smoothly and was compliant with all health and safety requirements.

Crossing Stanifield Lane – update

The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury reported that following the request from Councillor Haydn Williams to circulate the correspondence with the Chief Executive at South Ribble Borough Council, this had been circulated to the Parish Council for consideration. The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury asked if the Parish Council should take further action with regard to the Parish Council not being informed of the Cabinet's decision. It was noted that the press release regarding the crossing had been amended in line with the comments made by the Clerk and Chairman and had since been released.

Councillor Andreea Oprea said that she did not think the Parish Council should pursue a complaint especially as the press release had been reworded, and that we would not gain anything from making a complaint, so it was best to leave this. Councillor Michael Green, Councillor Tony Green, Councillor Baz Howard, Councillor Karen Walton and Councillor Phil Lawson all agreed with the comments made by Councillor Andreea Oprea and in addition to this it was noted the Parish Council had no control over social media comments made by third parties. Councillor Haydn Williams stated that the Parish Council had no grounds to put forward an official complaint due to the Parish Council not being told a decision due to Purdah. The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury said he was disappointed with the actions of South Ribble Borough Council but said it was important that the Parish Council had the opportunity to discuss this issue and agreed that the Parish Council should not take this matter any further.

Item of Urgent Business – Mill Street lighting

The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury reported that South Ribble Borough Council had agreed to install a new electricity feeder pillar at Mill Street, and they were asking if the Parish Council would pay for the electricity on an annual basis. South Ribble Borough Council were planning on having the pillar installed before Christmas so it could be used to power a Christmas tree at Mill Street. South Ribble Borough Council would own the pillar as their asset and would pay for the relevant insurance. Farington Parish Council would have the key to the pillar and it would be our responsibility to allow community groups and others to use the electricity for events as appropriate. The Borough Council had confirmed that there would be no standing charge for the electricity and the estimated annual costs for the electricity for the Christmas tree would be £24.00. If the Parish Council agreed, then the Borough Council would draw up an agreement between the Borough and Parish Councils to make all responsibilities clear. There were some concerns raised about

this proposal and a couple of issues raised in regard to any damage to the pillar, any theft of electricity, and if the local residents had been consulted on the proposal to have a Christmas tree at Mill Street. It was felt that the Parish Council needed to make a maximum limit on how much electricity should be funded each year and a figure of £100 was suggested.

Councillor Michael Green suggested that as it was already quite close to Christmas, the Parish Council would not have the opportunity to discuss and agree the agreement between South Ribble Borough Council and the Parish Council. It was important that the agreement was put in place before the electricity was installed. He proposed that the Parish Council agree in principle to the installation of an electricity feeder pillar at Mill Street and that approval to agree and sign the agreement between both Councils is delegated to the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman. In addition to this the annual cost of electricity should be limited to a maximum of £100 per annum, unless given prior approval by the Parish Council. This was seconded by Councillor Tony Green. All present voted in favour of the proposal except for Councillor Baz Howard who voted against.

Resolved

That with regard to the electricity feeder pillar for Mill Street that the Parish Council agree in principle, and that approval to agree and sign the agreement between both Councils is delegated to the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman. In addition to this the annual cost of electricity should be limited to a maximum of £100 per annum, unless given prior approval by the Parish Council.

93. (24/25) Borough and County Council reports – for information only

Councillor Karen Walton reported that she had met with the Head of Parks at South Ribble Borough Council regarding a potential play area on spare land near Beconsaw Drive. The Chairman, Councillor Shaun Bradbury said that a number of residents had spoken to him about this and the Parish Council may at some stage wish to consider contributing to the play area if it went ahead. Councillor Karen Walton said she would keep the Parish Council informed of any progress.

94. (24/25) Clerk's Report – for information only

There was nothing further for the Clerk to report.

95. (24/25) Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled Parish Council meeting would be held at 7.00 pm on Monday 3rd February 2025 at Bashall Grove Community Centre, PR25 4JU.

That the public be excluded from this meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that there is likely to be disclosure of exempt information which is described in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 which is specified against the heading to each item, and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

96. (24/25) Parish Council Solicitors and Croner update (para 5)

A confidential discussion was held.