

**WEST FARLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023  
AT BRAMLEY BARN**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Moy, Cllr Morgan, Cllr Scott, Cllr Swan, Cllr Wilson and Mrs Amanda Broadhurst

**IN ATTENDANCE:** County/Borough Cllr S Webb, Borough Cllr L Parfitt-Reid  
11 members of the public

**APOLOGIES:** Mrs D Scott – The Farleigh’s WI

**1. INTRODUCTION BY CHAIR**

Cllr Moy welcomed all present and stated that reports from the WI and County Cllr Webb were available for residents to take away to read.

**2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022**

These were proposed as accurate by Mr Underdown, seconded by Mrs Wilson; with the majority in favour. The Chair signed the official copy of the Minutes.

**3. REPORT FROM THE PARISH CLERK**

The Clerk reported on the productive year that the Parish Council has had, which included refurbishing the play area, repainting the play area railings and purchasing new picnic benches for the green. It was noted that an Oak tree was successfully registered as part of The Queen’s Green Canopy, which was a unique tree planting initiative created to mark her Platinum Jubilee in 2022. September had seen the village mourning the loss of The Queen but, just before the Annual Parish Meeting, residents had come together to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. It was noted that this is the last year in the Parish Councillor’s four-year Term of Office.

**4. REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY & BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

County/Borough Cllr Simon Webb reported that he was elected two years ago as he wanted to make a difference, but the budget challenges are proving difficult. KCC has gone from having a balanced budget, to having to borrow from reserves to ensure there isn’t a deficit. The rising costs related to transport and child and adult social care are having a major impact. KCC may find itself in the severe predicament of going into debt, which isn’t allowed in Local Government. Even with restructuring, there would be minimal budget available resulting in only basic support being offered.

Child Social Services was recently rated as ‘Outstanding’, however SEN service have not improved at all and is still rated as ‘Requires Improvements’.

Borough Cllr Lottie Parfitt-Reid reported that, as both County and Borough Councillor, she has found this year to be very challenging. However, her roles enable her to have an impact on individual’s lives, whether this be through assisting with planning or refuse issues. MBC has a balanced budget, after renegotiating some contracts and Cllr Parfitt-Reid has enjoyed being the Lead in Communities & Public Engagement this year. With Cllr Webb, she has been fighting KCC’s planned closure of some Children’s Centres, as this is a vital service in the community. MBC has received funding from both the UK Shared Prosperity and Rural Prosperity Funds.

## 5. **REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS**

The Evergreens: A brief overview of the group was given which included that they have enjoyed talks about the Roman Industry in the Farleighs and Metal Detecting, which were both given by local residents, as well as celebrating Burns Night and the recent King's Coronation. The group has enjoyed outings including afternoon tea at a local garden centre, a cruise on the Kentish Lady (along the River Medway) and a coach trip to the Brick Lane Music Hall. The group is hoping to use the Parish Council's donation to help fund an outing to the coast in the Summer.

Village in Bloom Group: The group, which has been running for 6 years, aims to enhance the village, with planting on verges and installing planters around the village. They have not entered the annual competition for the past 2 years, due to the volume of paperwork which needs to be completed. Tim Knowles, who is one of the group members, maintains the various noticeboards and planters in the village. The annual Tallest Sunflower competition will take place again this year, with one especially for children. The group is hoping to plant woodland bulbs along the new permissive footpath and clear an area close to Smiths Hall. MBC has recently awarded the Village in Bloom group a grant of £500.

Village Charities: A representative gave an overview of the two charities in the village: The Ann Goulston charity (to assist the needy of the village) and The Oliver North charity (the Almshouse in Charlton Lane). The Ann Goulston charity has assisted one resident in the past year and there is £1,400 in the fund. The Oliver North Charity oversees the maintenance of the Almshouse and has a surplus of £1,900. The Trustees of the Charities are Mrs Julie King, Mrs Valeria Grainger and the Reverend Callway (although this is currently in the process of being changed to the Reverend Lorna Faulkner).

## 6. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Mr Andy Purvis, the owner of the White Horse pub, spoke to all present regarding his plans for the pub, which includes demolishing the pub and erecting 5 lodges and enhancing the facilities for the local petanque club, which currently has 30-50 members. There would also be a club house/tearoom on site. He showed plans and asked for feedback from residents and Councillors.

*The formal part of the meeting concluded at 20.35pm followed by refreshments.*