

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Frilsham Parish Council held on  
Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021 in Frilsham Clubroom.**

Present

Cllr. M. Allum  
Cllr. G. Barber  
Cllr. D. Benning  
Cllr. B. Lyon  
Cllr. A. Arnold  
Cllr. M. Goodenough  
Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk)  
District Cllr. C. Culver  
Mr. James Hole

**1 To receive apologies for absence.**

There were no apologies of absence.

**2 To receive declarations of interest.**

Cllr. Benning declared an interest in planning application 21/00444/HOUSE for Yelvers, Beechfield Land as it is behind and adjacent to his property.

**3 Election of a Chairman and Vice Chairman.**

**3.1 To Elect a Chairman.**

Cllr. Lyon proposed that Cllr. Allum be Chairman of FPC for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr. Arnold and unanimously agreed.

Cllr. Allum signed the Declaration of Office as Chairman.

**3.2 To Elect a Vice Chairman.**

Cllr. Lyon proposed that Cllr. Barber be Vice Chairman of FPC for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr. Goodenough and unanimously agreed.

**4 To approve minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

The minutes of the meeting of Frilsham Parish Council (FPC) held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by Cllr. Allum.

**5 Matters arising from the minutes.**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**6 Report from Yattendon Estate.**

See attached written report from Mr. Hole.

**7 Planning.**

**7.1 To consider applications which WBC has consulted FPC on:**

**7.1.1 21/01050/HOUSE – Yelvers, Beechfield Lane.**

*Rear and side extension.*

Cllr. Benning commented that he has submitted an objection to this application on the ground of over development, the planning application being incomplete and the physical impossibility to build the proposed extensions. The application is missing a roof plan and a site plan.

FPC considered the application and agreed that they had **no objection** to the proposal, however it was agreed that it would be suggested that the side extension be moved 300mm further from the side boundary.

**7.1.2 21/01248/HOUSE – Manderlay, School Lane.**

*Construction of a domestic swimming pool and pool pump room.*

It was unanimously agreed that FPC has **no objection** to this application.

## 7.2 Planning Decisions made by WBC:

### 7.2.1 **Oaken House, School Lane.**

*Replacement doors and roof to existing rear orangery.*

FPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

## 8 **Report from West Berkshire District.**

District Cllr. Culver reminded FPC about WBC Members bids which must be submitted by the 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Two possible projects were discussed: the addition of 20 to 25 trees to enhance the Pot Kiln Lane allotment site and the releveling/resurfacing of the playpark. Quotes are needed for the projects and funding must be matched by FPC or other sources. Cllr. Allum will obtain a price for the trees and associated fencing. Cllr. Lyon will contact AES in Beenham about the playpark work.

## 9 **Playpark and Facilities around the Clubroom.**

### 9.1 Safety issues.

The RoSPA inspection of the play equipment has been completed. As a result of the inspection, bolts have been tightened on the zipwire, a new gate latch has been fitted and the fence has been repaired. The following tasks still need to be completed: tighten the cable on the zipwire, fill the gap between the steel edge of the roundabout and the wet-pour, tighten the bolts and repair the edges of the multi-play unit, resolve the issues with the uneven surface, replace a second gate latch and prune the branches of an overhanging tree.

### 9.2 To receive an update on the Toddler Swings.

The rotting cross beam and leg of the toddler swing have been replaced.

## 10 **The Clubroom and surroundings and FFIG.**

It was reported that a branch on the road north of the Clubroom had been dragged into the Clubroom carpark. It was reported to Mr. Hole that there is a dead oak tree in the land between Nutwood Cottage and the track to Holly Cottage. Mr. Hole commented that an inspection of all roadside trees on the Estate will be carried out starting in late June.

Cllr. Lyon submitted a written report: The Clubroom is open again, however not all activities are currently permitted due to COVID restrictions. The Government COVID restrictions require additional risk assessments, social distancing and face coverings.

Bookings are being taken for children's dance classes, yoga classes, first aid training and children's parties. Lunch club and coffee mornings are expected to begin in due course but are not rushing back.

Repairs, maintenance and much of the additional cleaning required by COVID is being carried out by volunteers.

The Clubroom extension and refurbishment project is currently on hold due to COVID, but it is planned to resume work in the summer once restrictions are lifted.

Football has been allowed to restart and one of the teams is playing on some Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings. The other team is planning to resume with the new season in September.

The playground and surrounding outside area continue to be well used every day by many children and families and is a greatly valued asset.

## 11 **Yattendon and Frilsham Sports and Social Trust.**

Due to COVID restrictions, there will be no grand fete again this year. This will result in no income to the Trust for two successive years; as a result there will be no discretionary grants again this year. It is hoped that there will be a fete next year raising more funds than previously.

There will be small fund-raising events over the late May Bank Holiday weekend and again in September. On the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> May, there will be a Family Mystery Trail of 1-2 miles and a Villages' Orienteering Dash of 5+ miles, both events start in Yattendon Square between 9.30am and 10.30am. From 10am on the 31<sup>st</sup> May there will be a cake and produce

stall in Yattendon Square. On the 19<sup>th</sup> September the Yattendon Classic Car show will take place.

## **12 Clerks Report.**

### **12.1 Exemption from External Audit.**

Given that FPC meets the criteria specified for exemption from External Audit, it was resolved that FPC would certify themselves as exempt.

### **12.2 Approval of Annual Governance Statement.**

The Annual Statement of Governance for the year ending the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Having read the statement, councillors resolved to approve it.

### **12.3 Annual Statement of Accounts.**

The statement of accounts for the financial year 20/21, having been circulated prior to the meeting was unanimously approved.

## **13 Finances.**

### **13.1 Financial Statement.**

The Financial Statement was circulated to those present prior to the meeting and showed a balance of £41,379.31 once all payments and credits have cleared.

Payments since the last meeting:

DD	Gigaclear (April Broadband)	£35.00
SO	Helen Pratt (March salary)	£213.49
100856	West Berkshire District Council (bin emptying)	£97.10
DD	Gigaclear (May Broadband)	£35.00
SO	Helen Pratt (April salary)	£213.49
100857	Post Office Ltd (SSE 13/2/21 – 10/5/2021)	£44.46
100858	Playsafety Ltd (RoSPA inspection)	£90.60
100859	HALC (BALC membership)	£73.05
100860	C. H. Hyde (Internal audit)	£50.00
100861	Helen Pratt (Microsoft subscription)	£135.36

A sum of £21,000 is ringfenced as a donation to the Clubroom for the refurbishment/rebuild project, including funds for FY20/21.

### **13.2 Parish Online.**

It was agreed that FPC would take out a year's subscription to Parish Online costing £48.00 including VAT. This will enable FPC to map and manage assets and events in the parish more easily.

## **14 AOB**

### **14.1 Electricity Supply.**

There has recently been an underground failure in the power supply to Frilsham which occurred in the School Lane allotment. It must be ensured that the paddock is returned to its original state.

Cllr. Benning raised concerns that the current electricity supply is not sufficient to provide the community's future electricity needs. If a third phase (a single extra line) was to be installed, the power supply to Frilsham would be tripled. District Cllr. Culver agreed to find out if WBC has any traction in improving the electricity supply.

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact SSE and ask about their future strategy for Frilsham moving to a three phase supply.

### **14.2 John Goodenough.**

Best wishes were sent to John Goodenough who has currently unwell.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Next meeting of Frilsham Parish Council: Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30pm.

**The Yattendon Estate  
2020/21 annual report**

Firstly, a hello from me. Due to our current environment, I haven't been able to meet many of you which I hadn't envisaged when my wife and I decided to relocate from Kent to West Berkshire! So for those who I haven't met yet, Alice and I arrived last September with our two young children, George (3 years old) and Emily, who is nearly 2. We were both raised in the countryside, Alice in Herefordshire, and I grew up on the family farm in Dorset. We have been made to feel very welcome since arriving and thank you to those that have gone out their way to make sure we have settled in.

Outside of COVID, there have been quite a few changes to the wider landscape over the last 12 months, and we will see over the next 5 years, quite a few changes to the landscape in which we have grown accustomed. Some of the main changes have been:

- BREXIT, finally done, but there is a huge amount of detail still to be finalised and we have already started to see the Government's ambition to move with apace for example, consultation starts on gene editing which could have a huge impact on agricultural yields. There are trade deals still to be done, will we see our markets flooded with products from NZ, Australia and USA tariff free?
- The Agriculture Act, finally receiving Royal Assent in November, has as its main strapline, public money for public goods. The withdrawal of Subsidies over the next 7 years and a new Environmental Land Management Scheme yet to be finalised are all going to contribute to some big changes to the way we farm in the future
- The Environment – legislation to be carbon neutral by 2050 and a general increase in awareness by the public suggests that the tide might be turning on the battle to reduce the harm that we are causing to our Environment. What impact will that have locally to our landscape?
- The global pandemic – will it have lasting changes on the way we lead our lives or will we quickly revert back to previous habits?
- Residential let property legislation – so there are more and more compliance requirements, improvements in EPC minimum standards being consulted on and more and more people are looking to rent in areas such as this as they no longer need to be in the office 5 days a week.
- A weak sterling, awareness of one's carbon footprint and the pandemic are all helping the staycation market – will it remain?

So from a macro scale to a micro scale and things closer to home:

### **Residential**

The Estate is home to over 750 people and with the exception of a few empty properties which are undergoing refurbishment, we are fully occupied. When properties do come up, we find a huge demand to live in and around the area, and properties are refurbished prior to reletting and in the last year, this has included 5 full property refurbishments. We will be looking at alternative heating sources as part of our desire to reduce our own carbon footprint on the Estate.

### **Commercial**

With some 330 people working across 35 businesses based in and around Yattendon, the Estate is a key place for a huge amount of rural business revenues. These in turn support the village shop, the local pubs, the pantry as well as supporting one another. We are 97% occupied and always on the lookout for businesses wanting to relocate to the Estate.

COVID has impacted nearly all our tenants and the Estate have done all they can to support those and as a result, we have only had two businesses leave – a catering firm which exercised a break clause given the future of no weddings and events, and a Counsellor who was unable to operate with the covid restrictions.

Businesses have adapted with various new offerings, takeaways, online classes, online deliveries – they are a resourceful bunch and do support them where you can.

Projects over the last 12 months include the completion of the Pot Kiln refurbishment to provide 10 bedrooms and we are looking to change the Old Forge into a florist to open this summer.

### **Farming**

Frilsham Parish Council  
Signed:

2021/10  
Date:

Harvest 2020 will go down like 2020 for most of us, one of the worst harvests on records and we were not alone in that with all farming business reporting a disastrous year. 2021 harvest establishment has gone well and we now have had more than enough rain and need some warmth!

The biggest change is the Estate's application for a new mid-tier countryside stewardship agreement which gained approval earlier this year. This is a really exciting and ambitious plan for the Estate and signals the Estate's intention to increase the biodiversity across the estate, reduce our own carbon footprint and improve the landscape that we all live within. Over the course of the next 5 years, you will see the establishment of:

- 115 acres of grass and wildflower plots
- 122 acres planted annually with a pollen and nectar mix
- 65 acres planted with a wild bird food mix
- 60 acres planted with a bumblebee mix
- 30 acres of grass buffer strips established
- 35 acres arable reversion
- 500 acres of over winter cover crops established
- 350 acres rotational legume fallow
- 107 acres of legume & herb rich grass to be established
- 112 acres of low input & species rich grassland
- 4.3km new hedgerow planting & gapping up (on top of 118km of existing hedgerows)

### **Christmas trees**

A very busy year both on the wholesale and retail front. COVID saw more people wanting to shop locally and the changes we made to the layout of the barn meant that people felt safer and we saw a 10% increase in footfall. New services this year include reserving a time slot to book your shopping window and a click and collect service. It was a real shame not to have our usual Christmas market but we are hopeful it will be back this year. 140,000 new trees have been planted at Childs Court Farm over the last 12 months and 40,000 pot grown trees to match the huge rise in popularity. Internet sales of trees was up 5 fold on the previous year reflecting customer shopping habits given the pandemic.

### **Woodland**

Normal woodland works are undertaken each year with a combination of thinnings and clear fell and replating. In addition, we are having to deal with Ash dieback and the impact that is having on the countryside and you will see more and more ash trees being felled over the coming months.

At the other end of the scale, over the last 3 months, the team have planted over 4,500 new trees with species ranging from the traditional mixed broadleaves such as Oak, Chestnut, Alder; mixed shrubs for the woodland perimeters for their fruit and berry producing ability including varieties such as Wild Pear, Crab Apple, Cherry and Blackthorn, as well as some more unusual species such as Sequoia, Redwoods and Bog Cypress. Next year there are greater plans with over 15,000 trees planned to be planted.

We are about to start the process of a new 10 year woodland management plan which will give us the footprint for the next decade. This process will take a year and at the same time, a roadside tree survey will be undertaken to identify any hazardous trees.

### **Village stores**

What a year. Footfall up 33% and the team have been flat out. As a result of the pandemic, the various lines have been refined in the store and Eugene is always keen to hear of any suggestions for new products. The team are able to take orders over phone, email and they are happy to source any item you may need and most of the time, can get it for you within 24 hours which beats any supermarket delivery and gives Amazon Prime a run for its money!