

FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 1078th meeting held on 3 June 2020 at 7:00 pm using the Zoom online platform

Present: Councillors Graham Harvey (Chairman), Andy Bennett, Alec Fox, Richard Freeman, Penny Learmonth, Frances Marshall, John Moore, Roy Ramm and Joyce Stoddart. District Councillors John Evans and Sandi Merifield were also present along with 4 members of the public (including Richard Silcock).

In attendance: The Clerk, the Assistant Clerk and the RFO.

20/87 **Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Peter Rose, County Councillor Simon Walsh and Youth Representative Elliott Smith. There were no declarations of interest.

20/88 **Public Forum**

88.1 ECC application to the Rural Mobility Fund – The Council were thanked for supporting the ECC application for funding to operate a Demand Responsive Transport service to link rural communities to the primary public transport system and other important services/facilities. (See Item 20/9 below)

20/89 **Minutes of Meeting 1077 held on 6 May 2020**

The Minutes were approved. They will be signed by the Chairman when the Council next meets in person.

20/90 **Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting on 19 May 2020**

These Minutes were noted and would be formally approved at the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

20/91 **Filling Councillor vacancy by co-option**

Following the May Council meeting, the Chairman had set up an online facility to enable each existing Councillor to vote for their preferred candidate. Richard Silcock had received a majority of the votes cast and the Chairman accordingly invited him to join the Council. Cllr Richard Silcock had signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and submitted it to the Clerk prior to the meeting, so he took his seat (virtually) and was welcomed to the Council.

20/92 **Matters arising from the May Council meeting**

92.1 Village flower tubs (Item 20/68.1) - Councillors were pleased to note that the tubs had been planted and that Felsted School had offered to water some tubs located in the centre of the village. Payment for plants, compost, fertiliser and 'bin bag hoops' would be approved later in the meeting. Councillors recorded their thanks to David Dempsey and all his helpers for planting up the tubs and volunteering to keep them watered throughout the summer season. Photos of the planting process had been included on the PC website.

92.2 Revised Audit arrangements for 2019-20 (Item 20/75.3) – The Clerk had submitted the 2019-20 year end documentation to the internal auditor about 2 weeks ago. It had however been agreed that the audit process would not be completed in time to be approved at this meeting. The Finance Committee would therefore meet on 29 June 2020 to study the year end accounts which would then be formally approved at the 1 July 2020 Full Council meeting.

92.3 Consideration of new Street Light Electricity contract (Item 20/75.4) – The Clerk had contacted E-On and obtained a revised quotation for the electricity supply which was 0.4p less per kWh than their original quote. It was proposed by Cllr John Moore, seconded by Cllr Richard Freeman and unanimously agreed to accept the revised quotation.

92.4 Proposed diversion of Footpath 73 near Potash farm, Cobblers Green (Item 20/77) – The Clerk had suggested to ECC Highways that a hedge be planted along one side of the diverted footpath to improve the immediate outlook, as agreed at the last meeting. Members noted that Highways had responded that they would not support the planting of a hedge because of possible future maintenance issues.

92.5 Annual play equipment inspection (Item 20/78.2) – It was noted that this inspection had been completed on 2 June 2020.

92.6 Road with no name application – It was noted that UDC had put this matter on hold at the start of the Coronavirus situation as they did not wish to cause residents any additional

concerns at this time.

20/93 **Felsted Focus magazine – Review of funding**

The Editor of Felsted Focus, Janice Ratcliffe, provided an update for Councillors. The April and May issues of the magazine had been well received and the June issue would be delivered over the coming weekend. An easing of the Coronavirus restrictions will enable the June issue to be delivered to (almost) all houses in the parish by ZAP Distribution Ltd. Spare copies would however be placed in Linsells shop. The magazine would also be published on the PC website.

The Clerk had circulated a spreadsheet detailing the income and expenditure for the magazine to date and the Editor confirmed that more enquiries had been received from potential advertisers recently as businesses started to re-open and adjust to the current situation. With an increase in the number of pages printed, each issue was costing in the region of £700 for printing and delivery. Members considered that the process was now proven and the magazine was an excellent communication tool for the PC. It was proposed by Cllr Andy Bennett, seconded by Cllr Richard Freeman and unanimously agreed that the PC would set aside an additional £1000 for use, if necessary, to support Felsted Focus over the next 3 issues (3 months).

Councillors thanked Janice Ratcliffe and her team for all the work they had undertaken to launch the magazine.

20/94 **County and District Councillor Reports**

94.1 County Councillor's Report – Members noted that County Cllr Simon Walsh had submitted a very comprehensive Report for June 2020 which included items on the re-opening of recycling centres, the resumption of non-emergency highway works, phased school reopening, Active Essex 30:30 campaign and the Government funding package to enable ECC to undertake infrastructure projects to encourage people to walk and cycle to reduce the dependency on car journeys.

94.2 District Councillor's Report – The District Councillors delivered a verbal Report which included: an update on the UDC Local Plan process (working on Statement of Community Involvement to ensure effective consultation with local Council's and residents / awaiting advice from consultants on way forward/ Government deadline of 2023 to complete the LP process): the Essex Coast RAMS scheme, which affects parts of Felsted, Barnston and Stebbing, and which will require funding of £126 per dwelling from developers: and details of Coronavirus help being provided by UDC to residents and a request to spread the word to encourage a good uptake (on PC website).

Parish Councillors suggested that UDC should seek advice from CCC and East Herts District Council both of whom had recently had their respective Local Plans approved.

Both District Councillors congratulated the PC and NPSG on the approval of the planning application on the former Bury Farm site which will deliver a new purpose-built Doctor's Surgery premises for the village.

20/95 **Correspondence**

Members noted the Correspondence received (see page 6) including the following:

95.1 Community Initiative Fund grants for 2020 – It was agreed that the Asst Clerk would submit a pre-application form to EALC, by 30 June, for funding to provide additional play equipment at the Willows Green play area. She would also obtain quotes for the work from 3 play equipment companies. (See also Item 20/98 below).

95.2 DfT Rural Mobility Fund – ECC were applying to the DfT for funding to set up a Demand Responsive Transport system in rural areas to connect residents to local facilities (shops, doctor's, clubs etc) and also to the wider public transport network (buses and trains). Members considered that such a scheme would be very beneficial to Felsted residents, especially those in the outlying Greens and hamlets, and had accordingly agreed to send a letter of support to ECC regarding their application. Because of the deadlines involved the letter had been sent prior to the meeting.

95.3 Churchyard Wildlife Area – Members considered a request for a pathway to be created through the Wildlife Area to enable family members to tend a grave. It was unanimously agreed to instruct the grass cutters to strim an access path and maintain it going forward.

95.4 Footpath 48 – Replacement of the 'wrong footbridge' – Members noted that ECC Highways had recently replaced a footbridge on FP48 between Jollyboys Lane North and Bannister Green. However an adjacent footbridge, which had been reported to ECC as dangerous, had not been repaired/replaced. It was agreed to highlight this problem direct to

ECC Highways and request assistance from our County Councillor to ensure that the dangerous bridge is replaced as soon as possible.

95.5 Essex Police – Low level anti-social behaviour in Uttlesford – Members noted that a dedicated website link was available for the Community Safety Team to receive reports of low level anti-social behaviour. Residents were encouraged to use this reporting method to notify them of any incidents.

Members were aware that this link had been used to report groups of people swimming in the River Chelmer from private land. Problems had also been experienced at Leighs Lakes where the landowner had had to erect fencing and signage to stop large numbers of visitors from encroaching on private land.

20/96

Finance

96.1 Payments – The list of payments on page 7 were approved plus the payment of £234.00 to ZAP Distribution Ltd for delivery of the Felsted Focus magazines (June issue). This payment would not be sent until confirmed by the magazine Editor

96.2 Receipts – Members noted that there had been no receipts this month.

96.3. Request from Felsted Memorial Hall for donation – The Clerk explained that a misunderstanding had occurred and the Memorial Hall Committee were actually looking for a contribution towards the outstanding balance of £4200 for the improvement works rather than the full amount, which had been implied at the last meeting. Members agreed that the Memorial Hall had fulfilled a central community function in the village for many years and that a donation would therefore be appropriate but that the matter would be considered further at the next Finance Committee meeting. District Cllr Sandi Merifield agreed to investigate if the Hall would be entitled to a UDC Community Builders grant.

96.4 Felsted Rovers request to postpone/reduce playing field rent for 2019-20 – Felsted Rovers had not played any matches since February 2020 because of the Coronavirus lockdown. They had played a lot of home games during the Autumn period and so had incurred higher than average expenditure which had reduced their financial reserves. They were accordingly requesting a postponement or reduction in their annual rental payment for 2019-20. It was proposed by Cllr Alec Fox, seconded by Cllr Richard Freeman and unanimously agreed to waive the payment due for the 2019-20 season to help support this important village club.

Shalford Football Club had enquired about the possibility of renting the pitches and pavilion facilities on a Sunday morning for 4 or 5 sessions/matches a year. Subject to Rayne and Felsted Youth team not requiring the pitches on any agreed dates, it was agreed to offer Shalford FC hire of the pitches and pavilion at £50 per session.

20/97

Coronavirus measures

97.1 Update – Members noted that, in accordance with an easing of the lockdown measures, the playing field car park had re-opened on 21 May 2020 and the weekly Green Waste collection service at Bannister Green had resumed on 30 May 2020. The children's play equipment remained closed along with the playing field toilets. It was noted that a risk assessment would be required prior to the re-opening of the toilets and play equipment.

97.2 PC Emergency Helpline – Cllr Roy Ramm reported that only 2 requests for assistance had been received in recent weeks, both of which had been met. He agreed to continue to hold the Emergency Helpline telephone going forward.

20/98

Playing Fields

98.1 MUGA surface re-lining works – Members noted that the re-lining works had been completed and the work had been carried out to a good standard. The Asst Clerk had circulated photos to Councillors and would submit an article to Felsted Focus publicising the recent improvement works at the MUGA (copy for website too).

98.2 Bannister Green play area fence – The Asst Clerk had received a second quote to replace the fencing with wood but was awaiting a quote from the same company to replace the fencing with a metal fence. It was agreed to also ask AJB Steel Products Ltd for a quote for a metal fence. It was hoped to have all quotes available for the next meeting.

98.3 Replacement of playbark edging in the main play area – Members considered the options detailed in the Briefing Note which had been circulated by the Asst Clerk. It was agreed to obtain a second quote for installing new wooden edging around the playbark. The Asst Clerk was authorised to accept the lower of the two quotes, within agreed parameters, in order to hasten completion of the work.

It was agreed that the Finance Committee would look into the feasibility of a change in the

surface from playbark to wet pour in the medium to long term as funds were not available for this project at the current time.

20/99 **Update on tree works at the churchyard, playing field and at Bannister Green**

The Clerk reported that there had been extensive delays in carrying out the tree works around the parish because of illness, adverse weather conditions and now the Coronavirus situation. It was agreed that the current contractor would be given until the end of September 2020 to complete the works, otherwise alternative arrangements would be made.

20/100 **Thefts at the allotments**

Members were dismayed to hear that there had been significant thefts and damage caused at the allotments 2 weeks ago. In the hope of preventing a recurrence, Members agreed to consider fencing off the allotment site. Quotes would be obtained for a) erecting a wire fence along the eastern boundary of the site from the rear of the Station Road houses to the existing entrance gate b) fencing off the unofficial access point on to FP62 in the south east corner of the site and c) installing a gate at the Mill Road entrance. Access to FP62 along the eastern boundary would of course be maintained. Notices would be erected pointing out that there was no public right of way across the allotment site.

20/101 **Felsted Nature Area**

The Asst Clerk reported that the wild flowers had grown well again this year and lots of people were using the Nature Area for their daily walks. The prolonged spell of hot dry weather had however adversely affected the newly planted trees, especially the Hornbeam, despite 2 residents and JCM Services regularly watering them. The Village Attendant would be asked to empty the Nature Area bins more frequently now that more people were using the area.

20/102 **Chairman's Matters**

102.1 Future planning – The Chairman suggested that the PC should continue to hold virtual meetings for the foreseeable future and be cautious about resuming meeting in person. Residents should be encouraged to join the virtual meetings. The Council should be proactive and discuss new ways of working going forward, including online banking. It was agreed to include this as an Agenda item at the next meeting. It was also agreed, as a trial, to start the next full council meeting at 6pm instead of 7pm. If Councillors wished to request that an item be placed on a future Agenda, they should submit full details to the Clerk at least one week before the meeting.

20/103 **Clerk's Matters**

103.1 Unlocking public toilets and car park – The Clerk had advertised this vacancy in Felsted Focus and on the notice boards but there had been no applications received to date.

103.2 Car Park area adjacent to the Swan – There had been problems accessing the Land Registry site but these were now being addressed.

103.3 Assets of Community Value – The Asst Clerk reminded members that the 5 existing ACV's expired in June 2020. UDC were now processing applications again so applications had been submitted for the allotments, Bannister Green, Ravens Crescent play area, Willows Green play area and the main playing field to continue to be designated as ACV's.

103.4 Art competition 2020 – Cllr Richard Freeman confirmed that anyone living in Felsted parish could submit a painting or photo for this year's competition. There would be 3 categories (up to 10 years / 11-16 years / adults) and the winners of the first two categories would receive a voucher for £40. The winning adult would not receive a monetary prize but their entry would appear on the PC website and in Felsted Focus magazine. The results of the competition would appear in the August issue of Felsted Focus.

20/104 **Planning Applications and Decisions**

104.1 DECISIONS SINCE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

UTT/19/3091/FUL **Land to the West of Chelmsford Road**

Change of use of land to use as a residential caravan site for 5 gypsy families, each with two caravans including laying of hardstanding, erection of 3 utility buildings and construction of access. **Permission Refused 15 May 2020** *“development harmful to the setting, character and appearance of the countryside.... does not demonstrate a safe and suitable access.... a unilateral undertaking committing the developer to financial contribution towards visitor management measures for the Blackwater Estuary does not accompany the application”*

UTT/20/0797/HHF **Foresters, Jollyboys Lane North, Felsted**

Proposed new garage/workshop and driveway. **Permission Refused 27 May 2020** “The proposed garage would, by virtue of its scale and siting, cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the street scene and setting”

UTT/20/0739/HHF **Melbury House, Bannister Green**

Single storey front extension and change of roof to existing front extension

Permission Refused 20 May 2020 “The proposed extension would, by virtue of its appearance and scale, cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding settlement”

UTT/20/0436/FUL **Seabrooks Farmhouse, Braintree Road, Felsted**

Demolition of existing barns and erection of 1 no. dwelling (Revised scheme to approved UTT/18/3110/FUL) **Permission Granted 19 May 2020**

104.2 APPEAL DECISIONS RECEIVED SINCE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

UTT/19/1288/FUL **Land adjacent to Cemetery (Gransmore Meadow), Chelmsford Road**

Erection of 2 no. single storey bungalows, associated garaging and parking area to serve adjacent cemetery. **Appeal Allowed 12 May 2020**

UTT/19/2241/FUL **Land adjacent to Cemetery (Gransmore Meadow), Chelmsford Road**

Erection of 2 no. single storey 2 bedroom wheelchair adaptable bungalows, permissive footpath and parking area to serve adjacent cemetery. **Appeal Allowed 12 May 2020**

104.3 APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE 16 JUNE PLANNING MEETING

None yet received

20/105 **Local Plan updates**

105.1 Uttlesford – See District Councillors Report above (Item 20/94.2).

105.2 Braintree – The Inspector’s Report had found the NEGC section of the Braintree Local Plan ‘unsound’ and had advised that the Garden Villages at West of Braintree and near Marks Tey should be deleted from the Local Plan. The Garden Village within Tendring District was accepted. BDC were advised that they should re-start the entire LP process.

105.3 Chelmsford –The Chelmsford City Council Local Plan had been adopted by the Council on 28 May 2020.

20/106 **Urgent matters and future Agenda items**

106.1 Village Crest - A resident had reported that the Village Crest had developed a ‘lean’. The Village Attendant had carried out a preliminary inspection and concluded that the structure was not dangerous but further investigations would be carried out to confirm if any remedial work was required.

106.2 Additional litter bin on the playing field adjacent to the gazebo – A resident had highlighted the amount of litter at this location because the gazebo was a popular spot for youngsters to congregate. The nearest existing litter bin was on the opposite side of the children’s play area. Members agreed that an additional litter bin should be purchased and installed in this location.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Next Meetings: Planning Committee meeting: Tuesday 16 June online at 7.30pm
Finance Committee meeting: Monday 29 June online at 5.00pm
Council meeting: Wednesday 1 July online at 6.00pm

..... 1 July 2020 Chairman

Correspondence List – June 2020

1.	Coronavirus situation - Regular updates on the Coronavirus situation have been received from ECC, UDC, EALC and NALC and other companies and organisations. Plus notifications of cancelled meetings/events/ services.
2.	UDC – ‘Simple steps to reduce your carbon footprint’ (circulated to Cllrs 11 May) - Council Tax hardship grant (circulated to Cllrs 28 May) - Parish Councillors should check their information as published on the UDC website (circulated to Cllrs 28 May) - Annual Electoral Canvass Update for 2020 – Changes to procedures (circulated to Cllrs 15 May) - EcoForum – Helping Hedgehogs flyer
3.	ECC – Community Initiative Fund grants for 2020 – Pre-application forms to be submitted by 30 June 2020 - DfT Rural Mobility Fund – Request for support for ECC bid for Demand Responsive Transport system in rural areas (circulated to Cllrs 26 May) Temporary road closure - Station Road from 14 June for 4 days (surface dressing)
4.	EALC – New process for registering legal queries with EALC - Legal Update – April 2020 - County Update – May 2020 (including Community Initiative Fund progress reports on projects approved)
5.	Churchyard wildlife area – Request to provide access to grave within the wildlife area
6.	Footpath 48 (from Jollyboys Lane North to Bannister Green) – Replacement of ‘wrong’ footbridge by ECC
7.	The Pensions Regulator – Re-declaration deadline 30 June 2020
8.	Chelmsford City Council – Proposed adoption of the CCC Local Plan at an Extraordinary Council meeting on 27 May 2020 (circulated to Cllrs 14 May)
9.	RCCE – Essex Warbler – May 2020 - AGM on 8 July postponed to a future date
10.	Essex Police – Low level anti social behaviour in Uttlesford. Report incidences direct to the Community Safety team at www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6464/Anti-social-behaviour-reporting-form
11.	Felsted School – Details of phased return of pupils

Unpaid List – June 2020

	Date	Num	Memo	Open Balance	Cheque number
B & H M Baker					
	02/06/2020	0810	Plants and compost for tubs	239.00	
Total B & H M Baker				239.00	102929
Currys plc					
	08/04/2020		Inks for home printer (lockdown n) Cheque	96.97	
Total Currys plc			payable to DMB Smith	96.97	102930 (part)
D M B Smith					
	02/06/2020		Clerk's salary - April 2020	1,173.03	
	02/06/2020		Clerk's expenses £17.03 - May 2020	17.03	
Total D M B Smith				1,190.06	102930 (part)
Daniel Plunkett					
	02/06/2020		RFO salary (reduced hours) - April 2020	91.17	
	02/06/2020		RFO mileage - May 2020	4.50	
Total Daniel Plunkett				95.67	102931
DCM Surfaces					
	22/05/2020	17059	Paint lines on repaired MUGA surface	1,680.00	
Total DCM Surfaces				1,680.00	102932
EON					
	16/05/2020	H187CD44E7	MUGA electricity	9.94	
	16/05/2020	H10842DC8F	Pavilion electricity	29.93	
	02/05/2020	H186F3E2BE	Street light electricity - May 2020	270.32	
Total E.ON				310.19	DD
Heather Read					
	02/06/2020		Asst Clerk salary - April 2020	518.67	
	02/06/2020		Asst Clerk's expenses £23.14 - May 2020	23.14	
Total Heather Read				541.81	102933
Nicholas Smith					
	29/04/2020		Repair of Clerk's laptop (Cheque payable to	80.00	
Total Nicholas Smith			DMB Smith)	80.00	102930 (part)
Paul Clark Printing Limited					
	02/06/2020	25177	Printing Felsted Focus - June issue	614.00	
Total Paul Clark Printing Limited				614.00	102934
Roe Environmental Ltd					
	27/05/2020	36787	Emptying septic tank	150.00	
Total Roe Environmental Ltd				150.00	102935
S P Barnard					
	22/05/2020		Village attendant - May 2020	425.00	
Total S P Barnard				425.00	102936
TOTAL				5,422.70	
PLUS: David Dempsey	02/06/2020		Water butt and fertilizer / 6 x Bin Bag Loaders	110.05	102937
NOTES: Cheque 102930 to DMB Smith TOTAL = £1367.03 (Includes re-imburement of invoices from Curry's and N Smith carried forward from last month)					