

MINUTES of the WEST FARLEIGH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held on Monday 17th May 2010 in All Saints Church

PRESENT: Mr Bruce Scott as Chairman, and five Members of the Parish Council, together with at least 13 Parishioners, and Mrs V Stancombe, Clerk to the Parish Council.

They were joined by County Councillor Paulina Stockell, Borough Councillor Brian Mortimer, PC Gary Shaw and Mrs Jo Harfleet, KM Correspondent.

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Were received from Parish Councillor D Bailey and Borough Councillors C Parr and J Wilson.

3. POLICE REPORT BY PC GARY SHAW

PC Gary Shaw reported the last twelve months has shown a reduction in the Ward of 23% of all crime recorded. Noting that PC Shaw is due to retire at the end of 2010, the Chairman thanked him for his hard work for the Parish and the PC left the meeting to attend to other duties.

4. COUNTY COUNCILLOR - PAULINA STOCKELL

Cllr Stockell circulated her report of the year's events. Cllr Stockell highlighted that KCC has, for the eighth year running, returned a four star excellent rating from the Audit Commission. Cllr Stockell reported that KCC strives to maintain the front line services whilst keeping Council Tax as low as possible and that over the next three years a minimum of £200m saving is required to be made. The issue of the state of Kent roads due to the prolonged bad weather was highlighted and Cllr Stockell reported that £1-2 million has been made available from Government and a local contractor was appointed in April to carry out the repairs. Following the departure of KCC's Chief Executive who is due to leave shortly, Katherine Kerswell has been appointed as KCC Group Managing Director. Cllr Stockell reminded everyone of the Members Grant that can be used by local groups for a wide range of initiatives and also the Members Highway Fund that can be used for anything relating to highways. In answer to a question regarding the funds held by Icelandic banks, Cllr Stockell reported that KCC are a preferred creditor and as such most of the funds are expected to be returned.

5. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR - BRIAN MORTIMER

Cllr Mortimer reported that the ongoing problems in the Ward are potholes and Heavy Goods Vehicle on which KCC Highways will need to continue to be lobbied. Cllr Mortimer reminded the meeting that he has a Devolved Budget Grant of £1,000 this year. The Chairman and Mr Martin thanked Cllr Mortimer for all he has done for the Council in particular on planning matters.

6. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 18TH MAY 2009

It was proposed by Mr Merritt, seconded by Mrs Hards, "that the Minutes be signed as an accurate record". This was unanimously Agreed and the Chairman signed off the Minutes.

7. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

The Parish Council had prepared a summary report, including draft receipts and payments figures for 2009/10, which was distributed at the meeting.

The Chairman thanked the Parish Councillors who give their time and effort for free for the benefit of West Farleigh and the Clerk for her guidance and knowledge in assisting the Council. Further thanks to County and Borough Councillors for their continued support and financial contributions. The Council has now agreed the lease for the proposed Community Centre and the next step is to distribute a questionnaire to parishioners to seek their views. Thanks to Stephen Norman for granting the lease on his land at Charlton Lane.

8. REPORTS OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

(a) **Rev'd Peter Walker for All Saints Church**

The regular pattern of services has been maintained with a regular band of parishioners in attendance but with all the major festivals well supported. The PCC has met regularly and works unstintingly for the wellbeing of the church and wider community and thanks to all the members and in particular the Churchwarden. Renting out the church continues to be publicised but more lets would be welcomed. The organist for the many years sadly died after a short illness and a replacement organist is sought. Overall a steady year with the faithfulness of the regulars being an encouragement.

(b) **Mrs Valeria Grainger for The Oliver North and Ann Goulston Charities**

Both charities are administered by Trustees whose primary responsibility is to ensure sustainability.

The Ann Goulston Charity is for the purpose of helping needy parishioners. The Fund relies on interest from capital investment and this has proved meagre in the current economic climate. The Oliver North Charity is for the purpose of maintaining the Almshouse. The land in Charlton Lane on which Northcote was building has now been registered with the Land Registry. During the year there has been a major problem with the main shared sewerage piping that it is hoped has now been resolved and the present tenant maintains the property to a high standard.

(c) **Dr Caroline Jessel for Dandelion Time**

The Trust changed its name this year due to being confused with another organisation with the name of Dandelion Trust. The Trust, located at Elmscroft House, is for the benefit of highly vulnerable children and families with the majority having been subjected to domestic violence and abuse and some with mental health issues. The Trust plans to develop the land in a sensitive way for the benefit of the whole community. There is a farmer who lives on site and looks after the livestock.

(d) **Mr Tim Hill for Life-Line**

With readership well beyond the Parish boundary Life-Line continues to be produced with 11 editions in the calendar year and thanks to everyone involved in producing and distributing the publication. Life-Line issued its 400th edition in June that included material from the archive. Suggestions for new types of article would be welcomed and in particular from the young people of the Parish.

(e) **Mrs Helen Swan for W.I.**

The Farleigh's W.I. membership continues to increase with many varied events on offer and this year included a Halloween evening, a trip up the River Rhine to see the German Christmas Markets and to London to see the Alan Titchmarsh show recorded, knitting hats for soldiers and making up shoe boxes to go to Afghanistan. There has been an interesting array of speakers at meetings and this year the W.I. celebrated its 90th birthday with a party in an Edwardian manner.

(f) **Mr Terry Ayears for Evergreens**

Enjoyed another full and interesting year of events with monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at various venues. Members are steadily increasing with a monthly subscription at only £2.00. An income of £3,300 enabled various outings to be arranged throughout the year including a trip to Merriements Gardens; to the London showing of the Lion King and two trips to Spadeworks. Thanks were given to the Parish Council for continued support.

(g) Mr Peter Baggott for West Farleigh Sports Club

The First XI and Reserves football teams finished 4th in their respective Divisions in the Maidstone and District League and both teams reached the semi-finals of the Tunbridge Wells Charity Cups. The Junior Section is growing and now has an Under 12 Team. This year the Club entertained the German friends from Ringstedt and supported the Village Fair by financing the marquee and running the raffle. The Cricket teams either consolidated or improved their positions in the Invicta League but were denied success in the 20/20 competition. The Club has spent money spreading loam to try to improve the football pitch and other expensive projects include the installation of electricity to the cricket pavilion, replacement of the tractor shed and eventually the football changing rooms building. Two more playing members have taken up residence in the village with their families. The Club enjoys sponsored by Jewel Ultra. Next year is the centenary year with celebrations planned. Peter Baggott was reminded that there can be parking problems on Charlton Lane during the Club's football matches and he agreed to look into the matter.

The Clerk to the Parish Council holds full copies of most of the Reports made at the meeting.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

A resident reported that approximately 6 acres of land, belonging to the Diocese of Rochester, formerly known as Vicarage Field, is for sale at Teston Lane and expressed concern regarding future ownership. The issue of speed limits was raised particularly the 60mph limit in operation on Charlton Lane, St Helens Lane, Kettle Lane and Hunt Street and discussion followed about how to get the speed limit reduced on these roads. It was suggested that a pressure group may have some success and the Parish Clerk was asked to establish if other Parishes have such groups. The Parish Council reported that it has done and continues to do everything it can to get speed limits reduced in the Parish.

The problem of waste tipping at Tutsham Farm was discussed and it was reported that the owners had been taken to court and fined for the actions.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.55 pm.