



# Figheldean Parish Council

(Draft until signed at next meeting)

Minutes of meeting 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at Village Hall @7.30 pm

Present

Cllr Tina Cole                      Chair

Cllr Darrell Amison

Cllr Nick Tissot

Cllr Angela Briggs

Cllr Katy Sturgess

Cllr Ian Blair- Pilling (WC)

Rachel Ure                          Clerk

In attendance: Simon Briggs, Richard Blake, Jackie Dryden, John Yelland.

## Public Question Time

Simon Briggs advised the Parish Council that the Village Hall have received a further approach from a company acting on behalf of Selnex to purchase the land that the telecoms mast is currently situated on. The price offered is £85k. It was noted that it is not up to the Village Hall to be able to formally respond to this request, as the land is owned by the Parish Council.

A wider conversation was held with regards to the long-term future of the Village Hall and income generation (annual revenue of £12k - £14k) from the mast, which is currently received by the Village Hall and goes towards improvements and repairs of the Hall, for the benefit of the whole Parish. It is noted that this income is likely to significantly reduce in the future. The Parish Council and the Village Hall need to work together to maintain financial viability of the Hall.

The possibility of requiring some professional consultancy on this matter was discussed.

**Action: Parish Clerk and the Village Hall to continue researching with regards to the original agreement for the Mast that was put in place 30 years ago. It was noted that the Village Hall Secretary has been passed a number of archived documents for review.**

Richard Blake left the meeting.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ACTION
1	<b>Apologies</b> Nil	
2	<b>Declaration of Interests</b> Nil	



3	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>          These were agreed as a true reflection of discussion and signed by the Chair.</p>	
4	<p><b>Matters arising / Outstanding Actions</b></p> <p><u>Resilience Plan Update</u></p> <p>Simon led an excellent Figheldean Resilience Plan update in Figheldean Club on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November. The meeting was well attended and I'm delighted to report 6 parishioners signed-up as new members of the Figheldean Resilience Volunteers (FRV). This takes the FRV to 18 members, a figure I think will grow over time.</p> <p>The next steps are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of the plan - Priority 1. This requires a safeguarding section and completion of risk assessments for likely FRV tasks relating to flooding; the effects of severe weather (snow, ice, fallen trees etc); and disruption to utility services affecting vulnerable parish members and/or children. Activation of one or both community hubs may be necessary in response to the latter task. Mark Hadfield will be supporting Simon Briggs with the production of the required risk assessments. Please expect risk assessments to identify the requirement for individual PPE (hi-vis vests, gloves, eye protection, hard hats, suitable footwear etc). Simon has enquired with Wiltshire Council if they are able to support with provision of PPE but are waiting to hear back from them.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: Cllr Blair-Pilling to investigate if Wiltshire Council are able to support with provision of PPE items for our Parish Resilience Plan.</b></p> <p>Cllr Amison distributed a draft Safeguarding Policy to all Councillors for review. Once approved, it is this over policy for Figheldean Parish Council that will be referred to within the Resilience Plan. Simon Briggs also confirmed that the Village Hall would be content to adopt a similar Safeguarding Policy.</p> <p><b>Action: All Councillors to review the draft Safeguarding Policy and submit any comments to Cllr Amison by the 15<sup>th</sup> December.</b></p> <p>Once approved, the policy will be placed on the Parish Council website and notice boards. We would also need to ensure that anyone using our facilities and are also working with vulnerable adults/children are fully briefed on the responsibilities within the policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurance cover - Priority 2. Zurich Insurance have confirmed they do provide liability cover for community resilience work albeit their focus tends to be on flood related activity. They will also consider providing cover for use of power tools albeit they'll need to see evidence of risk mitigation via completed risk assessments, and that anyone using specific tools are suitably qualified and experienced to do so.</li> <li>• Command and Control in-brief - Priority 3. At some point over the next few weeks Simon will wish to provide an in-brief to the Parish Councillors (approx. 30 minutes) who will be the 'activation' decision-makers. We sense we'll need a minimum of 3 Cllrs (as a minimum quorum) to approve any FRV task after which Simon and his deputies will co-ordinate and control the response via WhatsApp.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cllr Blair-Pilling</b></p> <p><b>All Councillors</b></p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and Awareness resources - in parallel with the above points, we'll start to look at training and awareness opportunities for Cllrs and FRV members. 'Communities Prepared' appears to offer some very useful resources.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council formally thanked Simon for all of his hard work on pulling all of this together.</p> <p>The current drainage outside of Figheldean Working Men's Club was discussed. It was agreed that this would need to be investigated via the Parish Steward.</p> <p><b>Action: Cllr Briggs to raise the request for maintenance of the grips within the drainage outside of Figheldean Working Men's Club with the Parish Steward.</b></p> <p>It was noted by the Parish Council that it would need to be decided if a Flood Warden needs to be identified for Figheldean. This role could sit within the Figheldean Resilience Team.</p>	Cllr Briggs
5	<p><b>Wiltshire Councillor Report</b></p> <p>A full report was received in advance of the meeting from Cllr Blair-Pilling which has been made available on the Parish Council website.</p> <p>Cllr Blair-Pilling reminded the Parish Council of the requirement to ensure that the 2025/26 precept includes an amount for a recharge cost for the May 2025 Parish Elections.</p> <p>Figheldean Parish Council queried with Cllr Blair-Pilling the introduction of a virtual footpath on Pollen Lane. This was referred to in a recent newsletter from Cllr Blair-Pilling. It was confirmed that this relates to the introduction of dotted lines that provide pedestrians with the right of way. It was also noted that Pollen Lane is due to be resurfaced in 2025.</p> <p>Cllr Blair-Pilling confirmed that Wiltshire Council will not be providing any funding to Parish Councils for the 2025 VE Day celebrations.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Chair Councillor Report – Cllr Tina Cole</b></p> <p>For my report this time I have to start with the recent spate of anti-social behaviour within our village, namely the play park and the illegal trespass and burglary at our village hall. Both incidents are being dealt with by the police with Cllr Darrell Amison taking the lead for the Parish Council on the play park and Jackie Dryden and myself liaising with the police on behalf of the village hall.</p> <p>There has also been another incident where a villager has reported items missing from their garden.</p> <p>It's essential that we all report any criminal activity to the police using the none-urgent 101 number or of course 999 if it's an emergency.</p> <p>On a happier note, I'm delighted to see the Resilience Team going from strength to strength with the first call to action recently being to grit the junctions of the village during freezing road conditions. A huge thank you goes out to villager Simon Briggs who has done</p>	



	<p>a great job getting our Resilience Team (RT) off the ground with more villagers signing up at a recent RT meeting at our local Working Men’s Club. Thank you too to Cllr Darrell Amison for assisting Simon. Great work from both.</p> <p>Sincere thanks must go to Graham Watson for repairing and re-installing the basketball hoops at our multi-court and for keeping our village in a fit state of repair and to Ian Grimes for assisting Graham with emptying our dog bins.</p> <p>Finally, we’ve had notification that Durrington Ladies FC have withdrawn from the FA Sunday League for this season but will continue with friendly matches on a Sunday afternoon. Their intention is to re-join next year at a lower league whilst this fledgling team gets off the ground. The Under 15s, Under 12s and under 11s continue in their leagues. They play on Saturdays.</p> <p>Thanks goes to all councillors and our parish clerk for your continued hard work and support of our village.</p> <p>Best wishes and a very Happy New Year.</p>	
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7	<p><b>Other Organisation Reports</b></p> <p>Parishioner, John Yelland, was in attendance and raised a concern about the reduction of grass cutting activities by Wiltshire Council, particularly adjacent to Pollen Lane.</p> <p>A discussion was held over the grass cutting within the Parish, noting that the Council had a revised plan in place due to funding and the environment.</p> <p>It was agreed to discuss this requirement with a local farmer who can support with grass cutting on verges.</p> <p>An issue with a blocked drain at Hill Top was also raised.</p> <p><b>Action: Cllr Briggs to raise the blocked drain issue on the My Wilts app.</b></p>	Cllr Briggs
8	<p><b>Parish Councillors Reports</b></p> <p><b>Cllr Nick Tissot</b></p> <p>Planning – an appeal has been submitted with regards to the planning application for Brindisi. It was agreed that the Parish Council will submit a comment repeating that we are supportive of the development but will respect the views of Wiltshire Council with regards to this planning application.</p> <p><b>Action: Parish Clerk to submit a comment, on behalf of the Parish Council, with regards to the appeal for the planning application for Brindisi.</b></p> <p>A planning application has been supported for works to be completed, relating to outbuildings, at Alton Magna. The Parish Council noted that the plans do not change the footprint of the property and agreed that they are supportive of this application in terms of upgrading buildings within the village.</p> <p><b>Action: Parish Clerk to submit a comment, on behalf of the Parish Council, with regards to the planning application for Alton Magna.</b></p>	<p>Parish Clerk</p> <p>Parish Clerk</p>



Works at Cliffend are progressing.  
 Works at the School are also progressing and all is on track for a Spring/Summer opening.

**Cllr Darrell Amison**

Policing issues – the recent reports of theft and damage to property within Figheldean were included in the November briefing from Wiltshire Police. The Parish Council have a very good relationship with our local PC and PCSO who have been very supportive with regards to the recent incidents.

It was also noted that some harecoarsing has been identified in Amesbury.

River Project –Wessex River Trust have confirmed that this is still a live project. They will remain vigilant for another funding opportunity. Cllr Amison is in contact with the Wessex Rivers Trust to ensure the project receives sufficient focus and constraints around stakeholder approval and finances are hopefully addressed.

**Cllr Katy Sturgess**

Defibs – revised signage has been produced to raise awareness of the defib locations and to also include information on how to use them. This has been included in the Parish Magazine and revised signs will also be placed on the village notice boards and on the front of each defib.

Playpark inspection – the recent inspection report identified some issues that need progressing. Cllr Sturgess has put together a spreadsheet ranking all works against safety and budget requirements.

**Action: Cllr Sturgess to request playpark maintenance quotes for the highest level of risk items and to identify the tasks that could be completed by Graham Watson (i.e. removing the rope net).**

Cllr Sturgess

The Parish Council agreed to look at on overall project in terms of a refurbishment of the play park and to investigate if it would be possible to receive a grant to support with this. It was further agreed that a project team, with other parishioners, would be put in place to work on a playpark refurb.

**Action: Cllr Sturgess to investigate the feasibility of setting up a project team with the specific task of working on a refurbishment to the playpark, to include some self-generation funding / grant applications.**

Cllr Sturgess

**Cllr Angela Briggs**

LHFIG Update – A345 improvements are no further forward at this time. Anticipated completion by end of financial year. The legal documents for the reduced speed limit within the village are with the TRO for processing.

Cllr Briggs has been advised to raise the issue with flooding outside of the bus stop on the My Wilts app.



	<p>A concern has been raised with the footpath that runs alongside the school. There are some trip hazards due to tree roots underneath the path. Cllr Briggs has photographed this and will raise the issue with LHFIG.</p> <p>Drains – These have been cleared recently. It is just the drain at Hill Top that remains outstanding for clearance.</p> <p>Grit bins – Cllr Briggs has reported two on the My Wilts app that need to be replaced.</p> <p>Cllr Briggs advised that, generally, there has been quite a delay with responses from Wiltshire Council and the progression of items raised on the My Wilts app.</p> <p><b>Action: Cllr Briggs to summarise all of the delays we are experiencing with Wiltshire Council and send this to Cllr Blair-Pilling.</b></p>	Cllr Briggs
9.	<p><b>Clerks Report</b></p> <p><b>Parish Councils transitioning to a .gov.uk domain.</b></p> <p>Following approval at the last Parish Council meeting Direct IT Services have now leased our new domain name: <a href="http://figheldeanparishcouncil.gov.uk">figheldeanparishcouncil.gov.uk</a></p> <p>The Councillors now have new email addresses ready to use. As a Parish Council we need to make a decision on how to implement the use of the new emails. It was agreed that Direct IT Services would set up an automatic reply, informing the sender that the email address has changed, and to ask them to please update their records. This will also include setting up a forwarding service so that all emails are automatically forwarded to Councillors new email address for a period of 3 months. Direct IT Services have advised that there will be no additional cost for this forwarding service.</p> <p><b>2025/26 Precept</b></p> <p>The deadline in which to submit our precept requirement for 2025/26 is the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025.</p> <p>For 2023/24 we set the precept at £20,358.52. This represented a 1% increase compared to the previous year.</p> <p>There has been a change to our tax base for 2025/26. It has decreased from 231.61 in 2024/25 to 186.11 for 2025/26, due to the boundary change with Netheravon (approximately 30 houses). This means that if the precept stays the same as last year, at £20,358.52 the % difference for each council tax band will increase by 24.45%. For example, a Band D property will increase from £87.90 to £109.39.</p> <p>It was agreed that a separate meeting would be held to discuss the 2025/26 Precept only. This meeting will take place on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 7pm. This will also need to include a review of all parish expenditure and in order to identify if any savings can be made.</p>	



PMN – The Parish Council met on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to discuss the 2025/26 Precept. It was agreed that a Precept value of £20,358.52 would be requested for the 2025/26 year, which represents an annual increase of 24.45% on a Band D property.

Expenditure since last meeting – all approved

Expenditure	Amount	Detail
Bank charges	£16	
Clerk Salary	£832	
Bawdens	£500	Grass cutting
Waste Collection	£120	Dog Bins
Waste Collection	£420	Bins
Grass Cutting	£290	
Hills	£141.70	VH bins collection
Parish Magazine expenses	£55.15	
Parish Magazine printing	£368	
Playsafety Ltd	£192	Playpark inspection
KC Gravecare	£341	Churchyard works
Direct IT Services	£60.97	Office 365 + Domain Registry
Clerk	£53.90	Basketball Hoops - Amazon
Total	£3,390.72	
Receipts	Amount	Detail
Figheldean Village Hall	£150	Car Park rent contribution
Figheldean Village Hall	£60	Durrington Ladies Football Pitch Hire
Brambles	£300	Car Park rent contribution
Clerk	£51.17	Refund of Basketball Hoops (minus postage)
Total	£561.17	

**Current Bank Balance @ 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2024 is £20,140.23**

10. **Other Parish Business**

A request has been made from Figheldean Village Community Events to contribute some funding towards the 2025. VE Day celebrations. This will be discussed further during the additional Parish Council meeting in order to agree the 2025/26 precept.

There have been no further reports of concerns with dog mess since the last meeting, but Cllr Cole will continue to progress the action of increasing signage within the village.

**Action: Cllr Cole to look into putting in place additional signage regarding clearing up dog mess and potential fines for not doing so.**

The CCTV at the Village Hall was discussed with the potential of additional cameras being installed that overlook the field. It was agreed that with a pending discussion regarding the Precept for 2025/26 and possible cost savings across the year that this item would need to be put on hold for now.

Cllr Cole

12. **Date of Next Meeting**  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025, 7:30pm.



Signed ..... Date .....