



FARNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL - Clerk to the Council: Mrs J.C. Gray,  
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Farningham Parish Council met via a video link on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020, and present were six parish councillors, the Clerk, Jane Gray, Sevenoaks District Councillor Philip McGarvey, Kent County Councillor Roger Gough and three members of the public,

### **Covid-19 virus pandemic:**

The government lockdown in the face of this outbreak forced the cancellation of our Annual Parish Meeting and our monthly Council Meeting was again held via the Zoom website. The Annual Parish Meeting takes reports from various bodies and individuals active in our community and although these did not get a public airing this year they are available to view and if interested please e-mail our Clerk, Jane Gray, for further information. Thanks were expressed to all these groups, many local and most voluntary, including the History Society, Farningham Cricket Club, Farningham Village Hall, Farningham United Charities, Darent River Preservation Society and Campaign to Protect Rural England.

### **Chair steps down:**

Another annual report is available from our Chairperson Daryl Burns who subsequently announced her decision to step down from this role. Councillors thanked Daryl for her hard work and leadership and are pleased that she can still find the time in a busy working environment to continue as a Councillor and indeed she was elected Vice-Chair. Liz Bourne has agreed to take over the Chair's role and we wish her well; Liz joined FPC last year and has lived in Maplescombe Lane for over 20 years.

Krish Shanmuganathan will continue in his role as Planning Chair and Philip McGarvey will remain Finance Officer. Two members of the public to date have expressed an interest in the Casual Vacancy left by Guy Williams resignation and due process will follow once the virus lockdown is lifted.

### **Darent Valley Landscape Partnership:**

Rick Bayne, the Landscape Partnership Manager, made a video presentation to the meeting, outlining achievements and future plans and hopes for the Darent Valley's heritage landscapes. This informative presentation is available from their website, [darent-valley.org.uk](http://darent-valley.org.uk)

### **Farningham Woods:**

Following a large number of vehicles converging on Calfstock Lane, Sevenoaks District Council and the police advised late last month that they would immediately lift the temporary closure of the car park at Farningham Woods.

### **Sevenoaks District Council:**

Our District Councillor, Philip McGarvey, advised that Stephen Whitehead has been added to the permanent SDC staff as the new Manager of Planning Enforcement and he is working on the backlog

alongside new recruit Tom Fry. As we know, SDC has been co-ordinating support for those in extra need during the Covid-19 crisis and full marks go to the staff – especially the Refuse Collection crews – for functioning so well during exceptional times.

**Police warning:**

Police have attended multiple calls during the pandemic of groups congregating by The Lion and in Farningham Woods. They continue to pay attention to these areas and groups have been dispersed with words of advice and enforcement where necessary. There was also an increase in fraud, catalytic converter theft and theft-shoplifting and residents are asked to stay vigilant and report any suspicious persons via the Kent Police Website or phoning 101 or 999 if the crime is being committed at the time. Action Fraud is the reporting platform for just such acts and their new website is [actionfraud.police.uk](http://actionfraud.police.uk) (or 0300 123 2040). However, be warned that if it is a suspected telephone fraud/scam hang up but do not use that phone again for five minutes (to call your bank or the police) because the fraudsters can hold your line open for two minutes or so, even though you have hung up. Best use a separate phone such as a mobile, or wait the five minutes.

**Bus services:**

In another response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Kent County Council has worked with Go-Coach and ViaVan to launch a new on-demand bus service operating like a shared taxi, meaning that journeys will be made only when and where they are required. The service will run between 6am and 6pm, Monday to Saturday and will usually pick passengers up within half an hour. It is an App-based service, branded Go2. Cllr Gough said this has been very successful and further details can be obtained by email from [info@go-coach.co.uk](mailto:info@go-coach.co.uk) . Users can download the app in the iOS and Google Play store

**Acer House:**

The owner briefed the meeting on progress of the landscaping to the front of Acer House, formerly Barclays Bank. Unfortunately, Sevenoaks District Council's tree officer has declared the tree to the front of the new extension must be removed because the roots have been damaged during the laying of the hard surface for car parking. A replacement tree is being sought and a yew hedge will also be put in place behind the brick wall adjoining the High Street.

**Trident:**

Another casualty to the virus pandemic is the delivery of Trident, following the Church of England's advice it should not be distributed as a paper copy. You can access an e-mail version and as a bonus all parishioners can view the copy, free of charge, on the home page of the EFL Churches website at [EFL-churches.org](http://EFL-churches.org) . There is a link near the top of the EFL Churches page.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020, in the Farningham Village Hall with a break for public participation at 9pm. Should it be necessary the meeting will be conducted remotely via the Zoom website and details will be displayed on the noticeboard at the village hall and be available from the Clerk.

**Cllr. Carol Salmon**