

FARTHINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

held on Tuesday, 18th July 2017 at 8.00pm
 at Farthinghoe Village Hall, Cockley Road, Farthinghoe



Councillors present: Mick Morris (Chair) (MM)
 Mrs Jenny Forbes (JF)
 Mr Henry Bankes-Jones (HBJ)
 Mr John Grant (JG)
 Mrs Philippa Clayton (Clerk) (PC)

Apologies: Mr Ross van Geest (RVG)
 Mr David Dashwood (Vice Chair)

Guest: Mrs Wendy Hancock (WH) (item 17/07/366)

ITEM		ACTION
	<p>The Chair opened the meeting by allowing a Public participation session: (members of the public are invited to address the council. The session will last for a maximum of 15 minutes with any individual contribution lasting a maximum of 3 minutes. Members of the public should address their representations through the chairman of the meeting).</p> <p>The subject for the public participation session was to present views on item 17/07/367 on tonight's agenda.</p> <p>Dr Chidwick explained that they are regularly kept awake by the peacock's noise and find it a big disturbance. He stated that it is a beautiful bird, but it is the noise that is the issue and he would like to see it moved to a sanctuary.</p> <p>Pauline Mason expressed concern that very few people knew about the extraordinary meeting and that it was therefore not a fair representation of the village. There was further agreement from the floor. Mrs Mason stated she believed the peacock should be allowed to stay.</p> <p>It was also stated that the new survey which had been conducted had not consulted with many people and was not a fair representation. Mrs Chidwick explained it had not been a true survey, it had been a case of asking questions to see if others around the pub vicinity were experiencing the same issues as her family.</p> <p>Wendy Hancock stated that a meeting had been called on the same subject 3 years ago when a neighbour had been dying, but the peacock had been roosting opposite and had been making a dreadful racket. Mrs Hancock stated that the village has enjoyed the peacock but she felt that it is now time to let him go and enjoy his life with a female.</p> <p>Beste Bragg disagreed with the view, stating that the peacock noises are random, not continuous, that the village is lucky to have such an amazing animal, and the noise is only for 3-4 months after which he is quiet.</p> <p>Geoff Wenmouth remembered when the peacock would eat out of a person's hand, but believes he is now scared and may have been mistreated. Mr Wenmouth stated that pigeons and foxes make more noise and asked whether the next step would be to get rid of all animals. The peacock is a piece of nature</p>	

	<p>and has a right to live.</p> <p>Steve Sneath stated that it is not the call for the village as a whole to say yes or no; only if the peacock lives right outside your door, should you have a right to say. The decision should be made by those affected.</p> <p>Gill Merritt stated she felt we are dealing with a difficult situation; of the people currently feeding the bird, one is very poorly and getting worse, but they get a lot of pleasure from the peacock and it would be a shame to take it away from them.</p> <p>The Chair closed the public time, thanking individuals for their input and explaining that the councillors would be considering the issue under item 367 of tonight's meeting.</p>																													
17/07/363	<p>To receive and approve apologies for absence:</p> <p>It was resolved that apologies from Cllr van Geest and Cllr Dashwood be accepted.</p>																													
17/07/364	<p>To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda: (Members should disclose any interests in the business to be transacted and are reminded that the disclosure of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest will require that the member withdraws from the meeting room during the transaction of that item of business.)</p> <p>It was resolved that there were no declarations of interest to be received.</p>																													
17/07/365	<p>To approve bills for payment</p> <p>It was resolved that the following accounts be approved for payment:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Chq</th> <th>Payee</th> <th>Amount</th> <th>Power</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>100743</td> <td>HMRC</td> <td>£70.00</td> <td>Local Gov't Act 1972 s112</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100744</td> <td>E.ON Maintenance</td> <td>£107.70</td> <td>Parish Councils Act 1957 s3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100745</td> <td>E.ON Lighting</td> <td>£262.32</td> <td>Parish Councils Act 1957 s3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100746</td> <td>Jon Hampson</td> <td>£70.00</td> <td>Open Spaces Act 1906 s9&s10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100747</td> <td>Mrs P Clayton</td> <td>£355.00</td> <td>Local Gov't Act 1972 s112&s111</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100749</td> <td>TexPrep</td> <td>£66.30</td> <td>Local Gov't Act 1972 s142</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Chq	Payee	Amount	Power	100743	HMRC	£70.00	Local Gov't Act 1972 s112	100744	E.ON Maintenance	£107.70	Parish Councils Act 1957 s3	100745	E.ON Lighting	£262.32	Parish Councils Act 1957 s3	100746	Jon Hampson	£70.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9&s10	100747	Mrs P Clayton	£355.00	Local Gov't Act 1972 s112&s111	100749	TexPrep	£66.30	Local Gov't Act 1972 s142	
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17/07/366	<p>To consider a request from Farthinghoe School to replace two sheds to the rear of the Village Hall with a single secure container</p> <p>The Clerk provided a representative picture of the type of container with which the school wishes to replace two of the existing wooden sheds to the rear of the hall.</p> <p>It was explained that the school wish to carry out the work over the summer holiday period and that payment for the container will be from school funds.</p> <p>It was resolved that all councillors were in favour in principle, but that the school would be required to provide written confirmation that either planning permission is not required or that full planning permission has been consented if required. The school should also confirm in writing the size and colour of the container to be provided. Wendy Hancock representing the Village Hall Committee was asked to relay this requirement to the school to fulfil before works commenced.</p>	WH																												
17/07/367	<p>To consider the latest position regarding the peacock and his daily and nightly activities which generate noise, nuisance and damage within the community.</p>																													

	<p>This is in response to complaints, both verbal and written.</p> <p>The Chair introduced this item by explaining that the extraordinary meeting had been called just to discuss this issue and not to make a decision on the fate of the peacock.</p> <p>The Chair read out a statement, a copy of which is appended to these minutes. He explained that the Parish Council's role is to answer questions and give advice on such a subject, but that the District Council has the authority, in our case, South Northants Council at Towcester, through the Environmental Protection Officer, Julie Ewers. He stated that any individual has the right to peace and quiet and that peacock noise and aggression is reported to be on the increase nationally.</p> <p>The Chair stated that the first course of action is to establish if the bird is wild or if there is a person or persons who take full responsibility for it. If it is wild, it can immediately be moved to a sanctuary. If there is a legal owner or a fully responsible party, then action can be taken by SNC, which would include insisting that the bird be contained between the hours of 7pm to 7am to prevent noise and disruption to resident's sleep.</p> <p>Just recently the chair had received a suggestion from Sue Abbiss-Stubbs and believes that it has a lot of merit and is worth serious consideration. This suggestion at last takes into account the needs of the bird and that is one of the most important issues.</p> <p>Sue has made contact with a lady in the Warwick area who is a peacock specialist. Initially the lady will prepare a temporary area for our peacock to live in and at the same time she will be looking to rehouse it in an area where other peacocks are roaming free (Warwick Castle has been mentioned as a possibility). If this cannot be done quickly then the lady will also bring a peahen to her prepared area as company.</p> <p>This action would be in the interests of the peacock himself, but also in the interests of village peace and harmony.</p> <p>The Chair then asked for input from the councillors.</p> <p>Cllr Forbes stated she thought that the Chair had stated the facts very succinctly, she personally believes the welfare of the peacock welfare is very important, but agrees that humans are more important. She said that although she doesn't live in the village, she still hears the peacock.</p> <p>Cllr Bankes-Jones stated that the fear is that if nothing is done, formal complaints will lead to steps being taken to get rid of the peacock and it would therefore be better to pre-empt such action happening.</p> <p>Cllr Grant stated that he believed a decision could not be taken as not all the councillors were present and that the issue should be deferred to a future meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas stated she had a lot of sympathy for those affected, but would say that she is personally not affected as she lives outside the village confines. She also stated that this is not a Parish Council decision; the councillors may have a view but that it is not in their power to do anything.</p>	
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	<p>The question was asked as to whether there was anyone prepared to accept full responsibility for the peacock. Cllr Bankes-Jones responded that he felt this was academic, as the Parish Council do not make the decision; that is down to the District Council.</p> <p>The Chair reiterated that any individual suffering has the right to recourse and can go to SNC for help.</p> <p>It was pointed out that one of the main advocates of the peacock is the one who has come up with the sanctuary option.</p> <p>The Chair concluded with the statement that the issue does not need to be deferred as there was a quorum of councillors present. It is a matter of record and fact that it is not a Parish Council decision, and that there is a District Council designated arm for the issue.</p> <p>It was therefore determined that the Chair's statement read out at this meeting would be used to offer advices to any future complainants, who should be directed to the District Council.</p>	
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The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Wednesday, 9th August 2017 at 7.00pm in the Beasley Room at Farthinghoe Village Hall.

We have called this Extraordinary Parish Council meeting tonight primarily to discuss the subject of the peacock.

We are now in the period April to September when the peacock is at its most active & it is during this period that the side effects of Noise, Nuisance & occasional threatening behaviour are at their highest.

It is also the period when most people like to take advantage of spending warm evenings in the quiet & peaceful environment of their gardens.

It is the period in which most people counter the heat by having their doors & windows open & is particularly relevant through the night to help with sleeping.

How the peacock's activities impinge on your life style mainly depends upon your proximity to its roosting spot or habitual movements.

Attempts have been made over the last 3 years to try to solve the problem, but these have usually only resulted in the peacock finding a new roost, which it has done several times & this has resulted in moving the problems rather than solving them.

We are now receiving new complaints both written & verbal & most of these are about noise, particularly in the unsociable hours of late evening & at daybreak.

It is clear that the noise factor has risen & that the peacock is now occasionally adopting a more physical approach to territorial protection.

There have also been instances of damage caused to gardens.

We need to examine these issues to try to determine if there are other solutions which can restore harmony.

Solutions which might also enable the peacock to live a more natural & happy life.

Recent complaints have led me to try to determine & make clear Parish Council's role in this situation.

In this particular instance the Parish Council can only answer questions & give advice, but it not the final arbiter.

It is the District Council which has the authority to deal with noise & nuisance & in our case this is South Northants Council at Towcester. The person responsible is Julie Ewers who is the Environmental Protection Officer.

I have had a long discussion with Julie to try to establish the correct way in which this situation can be handled.

Firstly Julie made it clear that any individual has the right to peace, quiet & safety in their home & if this right is invaded then it is reasonable for them to complain & to expect consideration.

She says that peacock noise, nuisance & aggression is increasingly being reported by many District Councils throughout the country.

If a complaint is received about a peacock then the first course of action is to determine if it a wild bird or if it has an owner or person who takes full responsibility for it.

If it is determined to be a wild bird then it can be moved to a more suitable location where it can live a more natural life such as a Peacock Sanctuary or a large country house which has a number of peacocks living wild in the in the grounds.

If it determined that the peacock has a legal owner or person accepting full responsibility for it, then the District Council can insist that actions are taken to ensure that the bird does not cause excessive noise, nuisance, damage or aggression. This includes making facility available to contain it daily between 7pm & 7 am to ensure that noise does not affect the remainder of the village who are complaining about the disruption particularly to their sleep.

I have explained in brief the actions which can be considered officially, but also feel that we can deal with this subject ourselves.

I have always believed that this Peacock is living an unnatural life & it is for this reason that we have the problems.

It has a yearning to be with other Peacocks & to live normally

Just recently I received a suggestion from Sue Abbiss-Stubbs & I believe that it has a lot of merit & is worth serious consideration.

This suggestion at last takes into account the needs of the bird & that is one of the most important issues.

Sue has made contact with a lady in the Warwick area who is a peacock specialist. Initially the lady will prepare a temporary area for our peacock to live in & at the same time she will be looking to rehouse it in an area where other peacocks are roaming free (Warwick Castle has been mentioned as a possibility). If this cannot be done quickly then the lady will also bring a peahen to her prepared area as company.

I believe that this solution should be considered both in the interests of the peacock, but also in the interests of village harmony.