

Extracts from Council minutes back to 1912 provided by John Gillman

Until reorganisation in the early 1970s, Faringdon's council was a Rural District Council, which provided many of the services that we now get from VWHDC. eg street cleaning, rubbish collection, planning

Broken Folly Seats.

Mr Chamberlayn called attention to the broken seat on the Folly footpath and the Council asked the Seats Committee to do what was necessary by them ((May 6th 1912).

Mr J Sheppard's a/c of 28 shillings for fixing and repairs to seats was read and on the proposition of Mr Liddiard seconded by Mr Burgess a cheque was drawn on payment. (Oct 15 1912).

Allotments.

A letter from the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries was read asking whether any Allotment of Land set out under the Wadley Enclosure Board dated June 10th 1864 as a place for exercise and recreation for the inhabitants of the parish and neighbourhood was still used for this purpose and he Clerk was instructed to reply in the affirmative. (March 25th 1913).

Accepting the Most Expensive Tender. Tenders for eight 48 feet lengths of new fire hose fitted with five pairs of new couplings and three pairs of old couplings were received together with samples of them:

- Messrs Merryweather and Sons£18.18.0
- Dinronis and Co£14.2.6
- Chand Mason and Co£10.16.0

After inspection of the samples the Council decided that the proposition of Mr Burgess seconded by Mr Moard to accept Messrs Merryweather's tender. (April 15th 1913)

Fires

Captain Austin reported a fire on Saturday April 12th 1913: a hay stack, the property of Messrs Liddiard and Bros at the top of Southampton Street, with account of expenses of £6.4.0 was read. (April 15th 1913).

Committees.

In April 1913 the Town Council committees were

- Parochial Affairs
- Street watering
- Fire Brigade
- Public seats
- Folly paths.

By 1919 these were expanded to:

- Street watering
- Folly Paths
- Recreation Ground and Public Seats
- Potato Spraying
- Fire Brigade.

Footpaths

Mr Weaver called attention to the condition of the footpath to Littleworth near Haremore Farm. The Chairman said he believed the matter had already been brought before the Rural District Council. (Oct 14th 1913).

The Chairman replying to enquiries said that Mr Adamas had been requested to fence off the footpath at the back of Haremore Farm. He had refused to do that but had offered to pre-gravel the path. (Mar25th 1920)

Mr Moard called attention to the dangerously high sided paths in Faringdon and suggested that the danger of walking off them would be greatly diminished if the edges were whitened and the Clerk was instructed to bring the matter to the notice of the County Surveyor. (Oct 25th 1916)

Mr Iborn called attention to the dangerous condition of the footpath near the Bull Inn and the Clerk was instructed to call the County Surveyor's attention to the same. The Clerk also undertook to call the District

Surveyor's attention to the bad condition of the footpath in ravel Walk adjoining Gloucester Street. (Mar 27th 1923)

Fires.

The report of a fire at Step Farm on Feb 25th 1913 together with the account of extinguishing expenses amounting to £20.13.0 was read and discussed and the Fire Brigade Committee was asked to report on the desirability of the Brigade attending fires without authority from some responsible person . (Nov 14th 1913).

Capt Austin's report of a fire on Saturday April 12th 1913 at a hay stack, the property of Messrs Liddiard and Bros, at the top of Southampton Street with account of expenses amounting to £6.4.0 was read.

The report of a fire at the Red Lion hotel on Nov 26th 1913 together with expenses amounting to £1.10.0 was read. (March 24th 1914)

Trees

Mr Weaver pointed out that many of the trees in the Recreation Ground were growing too large for the guards and the Clerk was instructed to arrange for their removal. (March 24th 1914)

Carpet Beating.

Mr Weaver said that for sanitary reasons carpet beating should not be allowed in the Recreation Ground and that notices should be erected to that effect, and by four votes to three the Council decided that the practice should be stopped, Mr Weaver offering free use of his field opposite for the purpose. (Mar 24th 1914)

Too Many Pubs.

Mr Abel called attention to the number of licensed houses in the Parish and suggested that some were not needed and that application might be made for them to be closed. After discussion Mr Burgess proposed that a committee be appointed to enquire and report. (Oct 20th 1914).

Mr Harris reported with reference to the number of licensed houses in the Parish, that by personal enquiries made by him there was a feeling of indifference in this matter. (Mar 23rd 1915)

State of the Roads.

Mr Carter called attention to the untidy condition of the road near World's End and Mr Morris to the bad state of Southampton Street adjoining Mr Pocock's house (March 18th 1919)

Move of Fire Station.

The lease of premises in Bromsgrove Place for use as a fire station was read and unanimously agreed to and was signed on behalf of the Council by the Chairman. (Dec 18th 1919).

Town Clerk.

The Clerk of the Council made an application for an increased salary and the matter was discussed in his absence. On being recalled he was informed by the Chairman that the Council had unanimously decided to fix his salary at £90 per annum for the general work as Assistant Overseer and the Clerk to the Council and £20 per annum for the collection of sanitary rates, as from Sept 30th last, payable in equal quarterly payments. (Dec 18th 1919).

A letter from the Rural District Council was read suggesting a salary of £10 per annum for a Clerk to the Council. Cllr Mr Prawn proposed the appointment of Mr Caddy as from March 31st last at a salary of £19 per annum. Seconded by Mr Proctor and carried. (Oct 12th 1927)

Tar Spraying.

On the proposition of Mr Burgess, seconded by Mr Smith the Council decided that a request be sent to the District Council asking that arrangements should, if possible, be made for tar spraying the Market Place. (Apr27th 1920)

Old Town Hall as a War Memorial.

Replying to questions the Chairman said that the War Memorial would remain the property of the Trustees, and the room on the first floor would eventually be available for various meetings. (Jan 18th 1921).

Stiles.

Attention was called to the stiles at Church Path and the top of Southampton Street and the Clerk was instructed to draw the attention of the owners to the condition of the same. (Mar 13th 1922)

Litter.

A letter from the Secretary of the Faringdon Tradesman's Association was read complaining of the untidy state of the streets on Saturday nights and Sundays. (Mar 25th 1924) Cllr Burgess asked for another refuse bin at the Town Hall, also if arrangements could be made for the open space underneath to be swept regularly. (Jul 7th 1937) A letter from the County Surveyor was read offering to have the open space under the Town Hall swept for the sum of £1 per annum and the Council agreed to the payment being made. (Oct 18th 1937)

Public Toilets.

Mr Franklin called attention to the need for a public latrine which he pointed out had become increasingly necessary under present conditions of travel. (Oct 15th 1924) The Chairman reported that the District Council would hand over the provision of the proposed latrine to the Parochial Committee. (Mar 17th 1925) The Clerk was instructed to endeavour to obtain the permission of the Lord of the Manor for the provision of an underground convenience on a site to the north of the Port Well. (Apr 25th 1928) The Clerk reported that Lord Berners was not prepared to consent to the erection of a public convenience on the north side of the Port Well in the Market Place. (Sep 26th 1928). Cllr Johnson suggested that the present owners of the Electric Power Station be approached and agreed with the vice-chairman that 2 urinals, one for each sex, were desirable if it could be arranged. (Mar 26th 1929) This request succeeded, which explains the close proximity of the Southampton Street toilets to the electricity transformer assembly.

Grass Cutting.

Permission was given to Mr Johnson to feed off the Recreation Ground with sheep as before. (Apr 20th 1925)

Motorised Fire Engine

(This became a big subject, resulting in major changes to the funding of the Fire Brigade. The problem was that outlying villages assumed that Faringdon Fire station would come to their rescue, but were not prepared to pay for the service or the insurance premiums due to the voluntary firemen.) The Chairman stated that it had been impossible to arrange for horses for the fire engine and the Fire Brigade Committee had ordered an advertisement to be inserted in the local newspaper to the effect that Persons outside the Town requiring the use of the fire engine must send horses to draw it. (Mar 26th 1916).

Cllr Murray said the coupling for connecting the fire engine to a motor for traction was too rigid for fast traffic. Mr Spandlin confirmed this. The Clerk was instructed to instruct Messrs Anne's Garages that the speed of the motor should be limited to twelve miles per hour. (Mar 27th 1923)

The Chairman reported that the District Council had no power to provide a fire engine for the District and after discussion it was left to the (Faringdon Parish Council) Fire Brigade Committee to obtain estimates and, if found practicable, to formulate a scheme to obtain, house and maintain a motor fire engine. Also to carry out such repairs as were necessary to the manual engine. (Mar 30th 1926) Cllr Mr Franklin reported that the result of the appeal for funds to provide and maintain a motor fire engine for Faringdon and District had been unsatisfactory. Lord Faringdon had proscribed five pounds. Uffington had suggested a meeting of representatives of the parishes and 2 or 3 pounds had been promised by residents in the neighbourhood and by the Farmer's Union. If the purchase was proceeded with under these circumstances the Fire Brigade Committee did not recommend further action in the matter. A discussion resumed as to this Council's liability to pay the expenses of the Brigade attending fires outside Faringdon Parish. Cllr Mr Goddard proposed that "owing to the unsatisfactory results of the present appeal to neighbouring Parishes, unless satisfactory arrangements are made by the responsible bodies concerned, this Council would not hold itself responsible for the payment of its Brigade for attendance at fires outside the Parish of Faringdon after March 31st next". Secoded by Cllr Mr Johnson and carried. (Oct 19th 1926)

(The plot thickens, as the Fire Service deploys far afield, yet with no motorised pump) Captain Leflin reports of fires at Shellingford on Nov 1st 1926 and at Uffington Brick Kilns on Jun 24th 1929 were read and passed. A discussion ensued and the Clerk was instructed to inform the Captain that only members of the Brigade should be permitted to ride on the fire engine. Also to insert in the Faringdon Advertiser and North Wilts Herald: "The Faringdon Parish Council desire to notify the District that their Fire Engine is not suited to motor haulage, and as a consequence, its services will be restricted to the Parish of Faringdon from this date". (May 14th 1927)

The sum of £5 standing to the credit of the Council, in a prospect of subscribing towards the cost of a motor fire engine by Lord Faringdon was by Cllr Mr Franklin recorded by Mr Goddard and refunded. Cllr Mr Proctor asked whether if the Owner in an establishment in the villages called for the services of the Fire Brigade and guaranteed to pay for them, the Brigade would be allowed to attend. After discussion the Council decided not to alter the decisions arrived at their last meeting. (Mar 29th 1927) (Reinforced Mar 27th 1927)

A letter from the Chairman of the Great Coxwell Parish Council was read asking if the Council would consent to the Faringdon Fire Brigade attending if called to Great Coxwell. The Clerk was instructed that the Council was unable to vary the decision already arrived at. *(6 month decision rule=no change)*

State of Road at Barclay's Bank.

Cllr Iborg called attention to the state of the road at the corner adjoining Barclay's Bank and the Chairman undertook to bring the matter before the District Council. (Mar 30th 1926)

Numbering of Houses in Faringdon.

A letter from the Head Postmaster in Swindon asking the Council to number the houses in Faringdon. The Council; decided not to proceed with the matter. (Oct 12th 1927)

Traffic Speeds.

By the suggestion of Mr Liddiard the Clerk was instructed to ask the Police Superintendent to use every endeavour to slow down dangerous motor traffic passing through the town. (Sep 26th 1928)

Parking.

The Chairman called attention to the insufficient parking accommodation on Market days and on his proposition, seconded by Mr Goddard, the Clerk was instructed to ask the County Council to provide further accommodation in Church Street. (Mar 26th 1929)

Speed Limit.

The Council discussed the area of the 10 miles per hour speed limit and the Clerk was instructed to ask the County Surveyor to consider the desirability of increasing the area. (Aug 21st 1929)

Vandalism.

The Chairman called attention to damage done to the shelter in the Recreation Ground. The Council decided to prosecute any persons caught damaging the Council's property. (Oct 22nd 1930)

Council House Tenants

The Chairman said that he had received a letter signed by two residents of the Council houses complaining of the conduct of users and suggesting remedies. The letter complained of the conduct of footballers kicking the ball into their gardens and trespassing to get it back and using insulting language when expostulated with; of danger to children when passing to and from the ground when motors, not visible until the road was reached etc. The Chairman agreed with Mr Carter that some action should be taken to prevent Sunday football. (Jun 8th 1932)

Flooding

Mr Liddiard called attention to the damage that had been done by the flooding of shops and basements during recent heavy rains caused by the continual raising of the road surfaces until they were higher than the sidewalks and reducing the intake area of the sewers. (Aug 25th 1932)

Traffic Noise.

Cllr Abel asked if any action could be taken to prevent the noise caused by heavy motors which had been parked in the Market Place during the night, starting up early in the morning. (Aug 25th 1932)

Folly Tower.

The Vice-Chairman pointed out in connection with the proposed tower on the Folly Hill, that this Council had not been consulted, neither had the Parochial Committee of the R.D.Council. (Oct 16th 1934)

Corn Exchange Purchase.

Following the consent at the Parish Meeting to the purchase of the Corn Exchange Buildings, Cllr Wright proposed that this Parish Council, having been authorised by a Parish Meeting held on August 26th last, asks the consent of Berkshire County Council and the Ministry of Health to the raising of a loan to this Parish Council of £2000 repayable over 30 years. (Oct 15th 1935)

Horses on Footpaths.

Mr Liddiard called attention to the great inconvenience caused by horsemen riding on footpaths, especially on the Lechlade road. (Mar 30th 1937)

Bell Hotel Pavement.

The Chairman called attention to the condition of the pavement in front of the Bell Hotel and the Clerk was instructed to ask the County Surveyor for its improvement. (Apr 22nd 1937)

Corn Exchange Income.

The Clerk read a statement of sums collected for hire etc of the Corn Exchange and paid to bank since the last meeting amounting to £52.7.9 and of his payments over the same period of £26.10.6. (Oct 18th 1937)

Advertising Boards.

Cllr Tucker raised the question of the erection of advertising hoardings, particularly with reference to a new erection in Coxwell Street and the Clerk was instructed to write to the County Council expressing regret that permission for its erection had been given, on the grounds that it is unsightly and undesirable. (Oct 20th 1938)

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John Gillman
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