



FERNHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday 18 December 2024

Minutes of the **Meeting of Fernhurst Parish Council** held at Fernhurst Village Hall on
Wednesday 18 December 2024 at 7.00pm

Councillors Present: Mrs H Bicknell (Chair), Mr P Bellet, Mr B Black,
Mr C Honeyman Brown, Mr G Inns, Mrs M Jenkins, Mr G Williamson.

In Attendance: Chichester District Councillor E Newbery, and Mrs E Ford (Clerk).

136/24 Apologies For Absence: Mr J Buchanan, Mr S Flatt, Mr C Lloyd, Mrs S Heath-Clough.

137/24 Declarations of Interests:

Cllr Bicknell declared an interest in the grant application by the Revels as a member of the organising committee and would take no part in the decision on this item. Cllr Bicknell also declared an interest in the grant application by Fernhurst Recreation Ground Trust as an ex officio member of the trust and would abstain from the vote on this item.

Cllr Bellet declared an interest in the grant application by Fernhurst Village Hall as a member of the committee until January 2025, and would abstain from the vote on this item.

138/24 Public Representations: None.

139/24 Previous Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting on **16 October 2024** were presented for approval.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting on 16 October 2024.

140/24 Matters Arising From the Minutes:

The Parish Council had purchased a new router so that “guest-user” internet access was available for users of the village hall and it was confirmed that this was now installed and working, with the same log-on details as previously.

141/24 County Council Commentary: None to note.

142/24 District Council Commentary: District Councillor Newbery thanked the Parish Council for the enjoyable Christmas drinks party which had been held the previous Sunday. A written report on District matters had been provided to Council prior to the meeting and Cllr Newbery presented a summary at the meeting (full report provided as a separate document). Cllr Newbery would be available to meet residents in a surgery to be held between 10.00 and 11.30am on Tuesday 21st January 2025 in The Hub.

Cllr Newbery left the meeting

143/24 Committee Membership

Membership of the committees was discussed and “new” Councillors Bellet and Honeyman Brown both requested to join two committees.

Resolved: To approve Committee membership as in the table provided in Appendix A.

144/24 Christmas Lights

A total of £198.58 of donations had been collected at the Christmas Tree lighting event on Tuesday 3rd December 2024 and the beneficiary of these monies was discussed.

Resolved: To give the sum collected to the Fernhurst Scout Group.

145/24 Report on 2025/2026 Budget

A proposed budget for 2025/2026 had been provided to Councillors prior to the meeting and was discussed. No further reduction in expenditure for 2025/2026 to that made at the October Council meeting was identified. The precept was the main income for the Council with a small but significant contribution from the burial ground. It was projected that there would be a shortfall in income over expenditure at the end of 2024/2025 of over £25K. Increases in 2025/2026 in the burial ground fees and the precept were discussed.

Resolved: To increase the burial ground fees in 2025/2026 by 20%.

Resolved: To set the precept level for 2025/2026 at £91,500.

Resolved: To approve the expenditure budget for 2025/2026 as proposed with a total spend of £119,612 (see Appendix B for a breakdown of the agreed 2025/2026 budget).

146/24 Review of Council Policies & Regulations:

Proposed revisions of the two key Council governance documents, the Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations, were discussed.

Resolved: to amend the quorum for full Council meetings from five to four Councillors.

Resolved: to adopt the revised Standing Orders as proposed.

Resolved: to adopt the revised Financial Regulations as proposed but with the changes to 5.8, 5.9 and 5.15 which were decided at the meeting.

Action: Clerk to circulate the adopted documents to Councillors and upload them onto the Parish Council website.

A proposed list of additional policies for review and adoption was discussed and agreed.

Action: Clerk to circulate a programme to Councillors specifying which policies would be considered at the remaining three meetings of the Council year.

147/24 Grant Applications

Nine grant applications for a total of £11,735 had been received by the Council and were each discussed in turn. A total of £8,400 of grant funding to local community groups was approved.

Resolved: that the grant application from the Fernhurst Centre Ltd for repairs to the cloakroom was not approved.

Resolved: to make a grant of £500 to the Fernhurst Parish Luncheon Club to support running costs.

Resolved: to make a grant of £1,000 to the Fernhurst Pre-school towards new fencing.

Resolved: to make a grant of £4,500 to the Fernhurst Recreation Ground Trust towards the cost of a ride-on mower/tractor.

Resolved: that the grant application from the Fernhurst Tennis Club towards the cost of floodlighting was not approved.

Resolved: to make a grant of £1,700 to Fernhurst Village Hall to replace the automatic-door operating system.

Resolved: that the grant application from Friends of Fernhurst School towards the cost of an outdoor table tennis table was not approved.

Action: Clerk to invite the Friends of Fernhurst School to submit an application next year.

Resolved: to make a grant of £300 to the Fernhurst Revels towards the running costs of the 2025 event.

Resolved: to make a grant of £400 (payable in May 2025) to the Fernhurst Good Companions towards the running costs of the 2025 Christmas lunch.

148/24 MONTHLY EXECUTIVE REPORTS/COMMITTEE & OTHER MATTERS

A) Finance and Administration

- Bank Reconciliations approval.

Resolved: to approve the July, August, September and October 2024 bank reconciliations.

Action: Finance Committee (January meeting) to approve the November and December 2024 bank reconciliations.

- List of payments for November and December

Resolution: To approve the list of November payments.

Resolution: To approve the list of December payments.

The next Finance Committee meeting would be at 6pm on Wednesday 15th January 2025.

B) Planning Committee

It was noted that a Planning Committee meeting had been held on Monday 16th December 2024.

C) Property, Highways & Environment Committee

The next Property, Highways & Environment Committee meeting would be at 6pm on Monday 13th January 2025 in the Hub, with a pre-meeting on Thursday 9th January 2025.

Date of Next Meeting: 15th January 2025

The meeting ended at 9.10pm

Chairman Signed:

Date:

Appendix A: Councillor Roles as agreed on 18th December 2024

	Finance Committee	Planning Committee	Property, Highways and Environment Committee
Cllr Peter Bellet		√	√
Cllr Heather Bicknell, Chair	Vice Chair	√	√
Cllr Bill Black, Vice Chair	Chair		√
Cllr John Buchanan	√	Chair	√
Cllr Simon Flatt	√	√	Vice Chair
Cllr Christopher Honeyman Brown	√	√	
Cllr Graham Inns	√	√	√
Cllr Margaret Jenkins	√		Chair
Cllr Christopher Lloyd	√	√	√
Cllr Sophie Heath-Clough			
Cllr Graeme Williamson	√	Vice Chair	√

Appendix B: Council Budget for 2025/2026

INCOME		
Miscellaneous Income	100	
Precept	91,500	
Interest Received	3,000	
Burial Ground Income	16,800	
Total Income		111,400
EXPENDITURE		
Administration		
Clerk's Employment Costs	36,000	
Clerk's Training	400	
Office & Meeting Room Rent	2,500	
Telephone, Website, Email	2,800	
Stationery & Printing	600	
Misc. Office Expenses	500	
Insurance	1,200	
Subscriptions	1,200	
Bank Charges	100	
Publicity (parish magazine)	550	
Audit Fees	1,509	
Legal Fees	500	47,859
Civic & Council		
Miscellaneous	3,300	
Councillors' Expenses	300	
Councillors' Training	600	4,200
Grants		
		12,000
Projects 2025/2026		
Playground Refurbishment		3,000
Cemetery		
		13,800
Streetlighting		
		4,923
Property, Environment and Highway		
		21,460
Public Toilets		
		12,370
Total Expenditure		119,612