FERNHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Full Council Meeting
Wednesday 21 January 2026
Minutes

Minutes of the **Meeting of Fernhurst Parish Council** held at the Hub on **Wednesday 21 January 2026** at 7.00pm

Councillors Present: Mr W Black, Mrs H Bicknell (Chair), Mr J Buchanan, Mrs M Jenkins, Mr C Lloyd, Mr G Williamson.

Also in Attendance: District Councillor Ellie Newman and Mrs E Ford (Clerk).

001/26 Apologies for Absence
Apologies were accepted from Cllr Bellet and Cllr Inns. Apologies were also received from District Cllr B Burkhart.

002/26 Declaration of Interests
Cllr Bicknell declared two interests - in the grant application by the Revels as Chair of the Committee and in the grant application by the Fernhurst Recreation Ground Trust as Parish Council representative to the Trust. The Clerk advised that it was allowed for Cllr Bicknell to take part in the determination of these grant applications and Cllr Bicknell elected to do so.

003/26 To Approve Minutes of the Meeting on 19 November 2025

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting on 19 November 2025

004/26 Matters Arising from the Minutes: None.
ACTION: Clerk to add Parishes in Bloom item onto the agenda of the February Council meeting.

005/26 Update on the two Casual Vacancies on the Council
It had been confirmed that no elections had been requested for the two casual vacancies and so two new members could be co-opted by the Council. Co-option would be included on the agenda of the 18th February 2026 Council meeting.

006/26 Public Representations
There were no members of the public at the meeting.

007/26 County Council Commentary – No report to meeting

008/26 District Council Commentary (see Appendix A for full report)
Preparations were underway for the new Food Waste Collections and Cllr Newbery recommended using the Chichester District Council app, which provided reminders of waste and recycling collection dates.
The first mayoral elections for Sussex had been postponed to May 2028.
Local Community Groups were encouraged to submit grant applications to Chichester District Council to access the Rural England Prosperity Fund and other grant streams.

District Cllr Newbery left the meeting

009/26 Christmas Lights
To confirm recipient of the donations collected at the lighting event on Tuesday 2nd December

RESOLVED: To donate the £100.16 collected at the Christmas Lights event to the Fernhurst Scout Group

ACTION: Clerk to obtain information on card machines for possible use in future collections.

010/26 To consider an offer to plant a new Christmas tree at the Crossfield green for future Christmas Lights

The Parish Council had received an offer to plant a live Christmas tree at the Crossfield green to be decorated with future Christmas lighting. Decision on accepting the gift was deferred until the February meeting. **ACTION: Clerk** to obtain more information on the size and type of tree.

Cllr Williamson arrived at the meeting

011/26 To set date for the 2026 Council Christmas Party

The Council Christmas Party would be on Sunday 13th December. **ACTION: Clerk** to confirm bookings for both the Village Hall and the caterer.

012/26 To consider arrangements for the 2026 Fernhurst Annual Parish Meeting

It was noted that the Annual Parish Meeting was not a Parish Council meeting but a meeting for all residents which was organised by the Parish Council. Four provisional dates for the meeting were discussed. Local MP Andrew Griffith was only available to attend the meeting if it was held on Friday 1st May 2026.

RESOLVED: to hold the Fernhurst Annual Parish Meeting on Friday 1st May 2026 in Fernhurst Village Hall and invite Andrew Griffith MP to be one of the speakers at the meeting.

013/26 Grant Applications

Eleven grant applications had been submitted to the Council for a total of £8,920.98. The grant applications were discussed in turn. In addition to the £3,710 of grants already made in the 2025/2026 financial year, a total of £7,606.98 of grant support to local community groups, or charities serving the local community, was approved.

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £500 to Fernhurst Parish Luncheon Club to support running costs (LGA 1972 s.137).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £1,000 to Chichester District Foodbank (LGA 1972 s.137).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £102.98 to Fernhurst Horticultural Society towards the Medicinal/Herb planting outside Fernhurst Surgery (LGA 1972 s.137).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £250 to Fernhurst Tennis Club towards the cost of junior tennis coaching and sponsorship in 2026/2027, and for that grant to be paid in 2025/26 (LGA 1972 s. 19).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £700 to Friends of Fernhurst School towards the replacement of sports equipment lost on storm damage to the storage shed (LGA 1972 s. 19).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £500 to Fernhurst Pre-School towards the cost of an awning for the play area (LGA 1972 s. 19).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £300 to the Revels towards the cost of providing essential services on the show day (LGA 1972 s. 144).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £250 to Fernhurst Good Companions towards the cost of speakers at meetings (LGA 1972 s. 145).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £1,225 to Fernhurst News to cover the cost of December 2025 to April 2026 issues (LGA 1972 s. 137).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £779 to Fernhurst Junior Football Club for new pitch paint rollers and a water removal machine (LGA 1972 s. 19).

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £2,000 to Fernhurst Recreation Ground Trust for recycling bin enclosures (LGA 1972 s. 19).

014/26 To agree 2026/2027 Budget and Precept

A detailed proposal for the 2026/2027 Income and Expenditure Budget had been prepared based on the 2025/2026 six month accounts, the projected expenditure for 2025/2026 and plans for the 2026/2027 expenditure. The proposal included suggested levels of precept for 2026/2027 and the predicted funds (both General Fund and Earmarked Reserves) at the end of the 2026/2027 financial year. The proposal had been previously discussed in detail and decision deferred until the tax base for the Parish was available. The proposal was discussed.

RESOLVED: To approve the proposed 2026/2027 budget with a total level of expenditure of £119,635 and a precept of £94,250 (an increase of £2,750 or 3.4% per Band D dwelling above the 2025/2026 precept).

A summary breakdown of the budget has been included as Appendix B.

015/26 To consider approach to the update of the Council Emergency Plan

An update to the Council Emergency Plan which was adopted in 2010 was discussed and it was agreed to form a Working Group to prepare a new plan. **ACTION: Cllr Lloyd** to signpost the Clerk to government guidance on emergency preparedness.

016/26 To consider the following planning applications:

SDNP/26/00002/LIS, Sussex Bell House, Bell Road, Fernhurst. GU27 3DH
Proposal: Internal alterations, single-storey rear extension with 3 no. rooflights, removal of brick lean-to on northwest elevation, replacement and alterations to fenestration, and associated landscaping works.
DECISION: The application was discussed and it was RESOLVED to submit the comment of no objection in principle, but to also advise that the Council objected to the 3 no. rooflights and would prefer vertical glazing using e.g. dormer or clerestory glazing to minimise light spill.

SDNP/26/00001/HOUS, Sussex Bell House, Bell Road, Fernhurst. GU27 3DH
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DECISION: The application was discussed and it was RESOLVED to submit the comment of no objection in principle, but to also advise that the Council objected to the 3 no. rooflights and would prefer vertical glazing using e.g. dormer or clerestory glazing to minimise light spill.

Monthly Executive Reports/Committee Matters

017/26 Finance and Administration:

a) To consider the December 2025 payment schedule

RESOLVED: to approve the December 2025 payment schedule (included as Appendix C)

b) To consider the November & December 2025 Income & Expenditure Reports

The November & December 2025 Income and Expenditure reports had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting (included as Appendices D and E) and there were no concerns.

c) To approve October, November & December 2025 bank reconciliations

RESOLVED: to approve the October, November and December 2025 Bank Reconciliations.

d) To consider the January 2026 payment schedule

RESOLVED: to approve the amended January 2026 payment schedule (included as Appendix F)

e) To consider quote for Auditing Solutions Ltd to carry out the 2025/2026 internal audit

RESOLVED: to appoint Auditing Solutions Ltd to carry out the Parish Council internal auditing for three years as per quote dated 11 January 2026 and for a cost of £1,050 plus VAT for a two day internal audit for 2025/2026.

018/26 Planning Committee – No comments

019/26 Property, Highways and Environment Committee
Cllrs Bellet and Jenkins had a meeting with the Parish Clerk and the Village Ranger on Thursday 15th January to discuss Property business. Cllr Bellet and the Village Ranger would check the Council assets in advance of the next Committee meeting. Chichester District Council had requested minor repair works to the Crossfield public toilets. West Sussex County Council had requested reports on problems with public rights of way in the Parish in advance of an inspection by the local access ranger in February. **ACTION: Clerk** to circulate request. The next Committee meeting would be on 18th February 2026.

020/26 Date of next meeting – 18 February 2026

The meeting ended at 9.05pm

Chairman Signed: ……..

Date:

Please also see documents:

Appendix A: District Council Update for January 2026

Appendix B: Summary Breakdown of the 2026/2027 Expenditure Budget

Appendix C: December 2025 Payment Schedule

Appendix D: November 2025 Income & Expenditure Report

Appendix E: December 2025 Income & Expenditure Report

Appendix F: January 2026 Payment Schedule