



Minutes of the Meeting of Fernhurst Parish Council held at the Hub on Wednesday 18 February 2026 at 7.30pm

Councillors Present: Cllr Peter Bellet, Cllr William Black, Cllr Heather Bicknell (Chair), Cllr John Buchanan, Cllr Graeme Williamson (arrived late).

Also in Attendance: four members of the public and Mrs Elizabeth Ford (Clerk).

021/26 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Sophie Heath-Clough, Graham Inns, Margaret Jenkins and Chris Lloyd. Apologies were also received from District Cllr Ellie Newbery.

022/26 Declaration of Interests - None

023/26 To Correct Minute referencing Error in the Full Council Minutes, 19 November 2025

RESOLVED: To approve the corrected minutes of the meeting on 19 November 2025

024/26 Matters Arising from the Minutes:

The arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting were discussed following the announcement that the West Sussex County Council elections would take place on the 7th May. **ACTION:** Clerk to look at alternative arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting date of 1st May 2026.

025/26 Public Representations

A resident had requested help in progressing a County Council repair of the roadside barrier over the stream crossing Ropes Lane. Another resident had requested a lower speed limit from Kingsley Green to Fernhurst Village. A third resident had enquired about improvements to road safety along Vann Road. The Council had been advised that the Chase Farm roof repairs were almost finished and the roadside verge at the entrance to the property would be restored when the weather improved.

026/26 County Council Commentary – No report to meeting

027/26 District Council Commentary (see Appendix A for full report)

Information on the new food waste collections would be placed directly on people's bin handles in February– the information would explain what residents could expect when the service launched in spring 2026. A decision from central government was expected at the end of March regarding the Local Government Reorganisation for Sussex. Laser Light Shows would take place at the Chichester Canal Basin on Friday 20 and Saturday 21 February. The shows would take place at 6pm, 7pm and 8pm, with each one lasting around 20 minutes.

Cllr Graeme Williamson arrived at the meeting

028/26 To Consider the Following Planning and Appeal Applications:

a) SDNP/24/02816/FUL, Weyspring Park Bell Vale Lane Fernhurst GU27 3DJ

Proposal: Erection of new, separate building to be used as an extension of existing residential care facility, providing accommodation for 17 residents, along with associated facilities and additional car parking (revised application and revised red line).

DECISION: The application was discussed and it was **RESOLVED** to submit the comment to object. This was because the proposed development would result in significant negative traffic impacts on Bell Vale Lane (following the large increase in the number of residents and related support staff and visitors), a loss of amenity for neighbouring properties and a loss of tranquility for the neighbouring Public Rights of Way and the proposal was therefore an over development of this site in this location.

b) SDNP/25/05104/HOUS, Updown Cottage Vann Common Fernhurst GU27 3NW
Proposal: Two storey and first floor extensions, and associated works.

DECISION: The application was discussed and it was **RESOLVED** to submit the comment of no objection subject to a condition requiring approval of an external lighting plan to ensure that the lighting was Dark Skies compliant and there was no light pollution for neighbouring properties and nocturnal wildlife (bats).

c) SDNP/26/00100/CND, Millfield Bell Vale Lane Fernhurst GU27 3DJ
Proposal: Single storey rear extension. Reinstatement of window to south elevation. Replacement of door to front of house with window and kitchen window with new front door and formation of new entrance steps. (S73 variation of condition 2 of permission SDNP/25/02876/HOUS- amended fenestration layout and reduction of window openings to rear extension).

DECISION: The application was discussed and it was **RESOLVED** to submit the comment of no objection.

d) SDNP/25/04989/FUL, 6 Midhurst Road, Fernhurst, GU27 3EE
Proposal: Erection of single-storey rear extension and part side extension.

DECISION: The application was discussed and it was **RESOLVED** to submit the comment to object on account of the low design quality for this development which was located adjacent to the Conservation Area and formed part of the village street scene (visible from the main road). It was recommended that a revised design for the extension with a pitched roof and with plain clay tiles to match the existing was submitted.

e) SDNP/25/01131/FUL, Scotlands Farm, Telegraph Hill. Fernhurst, GU29 0BN
Appeal, Ref. 6004640, against refusal to grant planning consent. Proposal: Alterations and improvements to existing vehicular access. Proposed three bay garage.

DECISION: The application was discussed and it was **RESOLVED** to submit the response that the Parish Council stood by its previous comment submitted on 3 September 2025.

029/26 To consider grant application for £340 from 4Sight Vision Support
The grant application was discussed.

RESOLVED: to make a grant of £340 to 4Sight Vision Support (LGA1972 s.137)

030/26 To consider proposed price increase for public toilet cleaning contract
The cleaning contractor of the Crossfield Public Toilets had requested confirmation that the Parish Council would accept an increase in cleaning charges of 4.1% from 1st April 2026. The request was discussed.

RESOLVED: the Parish Council would not accept the proposed increase in the charges by the cleaning contractor.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain information on alternative providers for the daily opening and closing and the cleaning of the toilets for consideration at the March Council meeting.

031/26 To consider membership of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management

Membership of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management was discussed.

RESOLVED: to join the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management for an annual fee of £105 for 2025/2026 and with the Clerk nominated as the Executive Representative.

Monthly Executive Reports/Committee Matters

032/26 Finance and Administration:

a) To consider the January 2026 Income & Expenditure Report

The January 2026 Income and Expenditure report had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting (included as Appendix B) and there were no concerns.

b) To approve January 2026 Bank Reconciliations

Cllrs Bicknell and Black had checked the reconciliations in detail prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED: to approve the January 2026 Bank Reconciliations.

c) To consider the February 2026 payment schedule

The February 2026 payment schedule had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting with supporting invoices.

RESOLVED: to approve the February 2026 payment schedule (included as Appendix C)

d) To consider interim internal audit report

The interim internal audit had taken place remotely on Friday 16th January and the report had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Three recommendations had been made in the report, being: to record in the Council minutes the statutory power used when making any grants or donations; to correct the minute referencing error in the Full Council Minutes of the meeting on 19th November 2025; to ensure that all Council funds were covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. The first two recommendations had been complied with. **ACTION: Clerk** to obtain proposals for a new fixed term savings account.

033/26 Planning Committee – No comments

034/26 Property, Highways and Environment Committee

A Property, Highways & Environment Committee meeting had been held earlier that evening.

035/26 To consider the co-option of new Councillors

Three candidates had applied for the two vacancies on the Council and all three answered questions on their applications at the meeting.

RESOLVED: to co-opt Cayte Pearce and Rebecca Stroud-Matthews to fill the two vacancies on the Council.

Cllrs Pearce and Stroud-Matthews signed their declarations of acceptance of office.

ACTION: Clerk to provide Register of Members Interests forms, Council email addresses and information on training to the new Councillors.

036/26 Date of next meeting – 18 March 2026

Cllrs Pearce and Stroud-Matthews and two members of the public left the meeting.

037/26 To resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting

RESOLVED: in accordance with the Provisions of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (staff employment matters)

038/26 To agree process for Staff Appraisal

The staff appraisal of the Clerk was discussed.

RESOLVED: Cllrs Bicknell, Black and Buchanan would carry out the staff appraisal of the Clerk in time for review at the March Council meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.50pm

Chairman Signed:

Date:

Please also see documents:

Appendix A: District Council Update for February 2026

Appendix B: January 2026 Income & Expenditure Report

Appendix C: February 2026 Payment Schedule