FERNHURST PARISH COUNCIL

# Full Council Meeting
# Wednesday 16 September 2026
# Minutes

**Minutes** of the **Full Council Meeting of Fernhurst Parish Council** held at the Fernhurst Hub on **Wednesday 16 September 2026** at 7.00pm (meeting started at 7.12pm)

**Councillors Present:** Cllr Peter Bellet, Cllr Heather Bicknell (Chair), Cllr John Buchanan, Cllr Graham Inns, Cllr Margaret Jenkins, Cllr Chris Lloyd, Cllr Rebecca Stroud-Matthews, Cllr Graeme Williamson

**Also in Attendance:** District Cllr Ellie Newbery and Mrs Elizabeth Ford (Clerk).

**149/26 Apologies for Absence**
Apologies were received from Cllrs Black, Heath-Clough and Pearce

**150/26 Declaration of Interests** - None

**151/26 To Approve Minutes of the meeting on 15 July 2026**

**RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the meeting on 15 July 2026**

**152/26 Matters Arising from the Minutes** - None

**153/26 Public Representations**
A resident had complained about the increase in the 2025/2026 precept. The Clerk advised on four meetings for Parish Councillors. **ACTION: Cllr Buchanan** to attend the CDC All Parishes meeting at 5pm on 12th October in the Committee Rooms Chichester. **ACTION: Cllrs Lloyd and Stroud-Matthews** to attend the virtual CDALC Meeting at 6.30pm on Monday 26th October. Cllr Stroud-Matthews presented a request from resident for additional traffic calming measures on Midhurst Road. **ACTION: Clerk** to convene a working group of Councillors to discuss road safety measures.

**154/26 County Council Commentary** – No report to meeting

**155/26 District Council Commentary**
Cllr Newbery had provided a written report prior to the meeting (see Appendix A). The key item was the announcement that the Sussex re-organisation was paused until a Government review of Local Government Re-organisation had been completed. District Council elections would now be held in May 2027 using existing boundaries. Cllr Newbery encouraged Fernhurst residents to stand in these elections and invited residents to contact her for advice on being a District Councillor. Milland Parish Council was hosting a screening of "The People's Emergency Briefing" at 7pm on Saturday 19th September in the Milland Valley Memorial Hall. This was free, with all welcome and no booking needed. **ACTION: Clerk** to publicise event.

*District Cllr Newbery left the meeting*

**156/26 To consider quotes to carry out tree works identified in the Parish Council 2026 Tree Survey**
Only two quotes had been requested as one of the contractors had been the cheapest quote for the last two tree works contracts. Only one quote was received and this was discussed.

**RESOLVED: To accept a single quote and instruct Adam Gibson Treecare Specialist Ltd to carry out the tree works as specified in quote QU-1788 for a total cost of £1,950 exc VAT.**

**RESOLVED: To approve a maximum budget of £600 to carry out the works on the three trees which had not been included in the quote.**

**ACTION: Clerk** to check location of the three trees and provide information to the tree surgeon to enable a quote to be obtained carry out the outstanding work.

**RESOLVED: To accept a single quote and instruct Adam Gibson Treecare Specialist Ltd to cut the burial ground hedges as specified in quote QU-1795 for a total cost of £1,150 exc VAT.**

**ACTION: Clerk** to apply for Conservation Area Notices for the felling of the walnut tree in the burial ground, and also for the crown raising of the Parish Council plane tree at the Village Green, so that the tree branches were of clear vehicles.

**157/26 To Consider quote for electrical works in support of Parish Council Christmas Lights Event on Tuesday 1st December 2026**

A single quote had been obtained from the 2025 contractor for the electrical works in support of the Parish Council Christmas lights event and this was discussed.

**RESOLVED: To accept a single quote and instruct WBES Electrical Ltd to carry out the electrical works as specified in quote QU-0762 for a total cost of £790 exc VAT.**

**ACTION: Clerk** to submit application for licence for Christmas lights at Crossfield.

**158/26 To Consider Arrangements for the Parish Council Christmas Tree at the Crossfield green**

A resident had offered to donate to the Council and plant a 12ft Norway Spruce at the Crossfield Green and also provide ongoing maintenance for five years. The tree was to be used as the Christmas tree in the annual Parish Council Christmas Lights event. This was discussed.

**RESOLVED: To accept the offer of a donation and planting of a Norway Spruce tree with ongoing maintenance, subject to its location being decided by the Parish Council (and close to the existing socket) and an agreement that tree could be removed by the Parish Council should it grow too large or be in poor condition.**

Planting of the tree would also be subject to a licence being obtained from the landowner Chichester District Council. **ACTION: Clerk** to submit application for licence for Christmas tree at the Crossfield Green.

**159/26 To Consider Update on the planning for the 2027 Parishes in Bloom Competition Entry**

Cllr Lloyd had provided a detailed proposal for a Parish Council entry to the 2027 “Parishes in Bloom” competition. The entry would showcase work already carried out Parish voluntary organisations and by the Parish Council. The proposal was discussed. **ACTION: Cllr Lloyd** to prepare entry and **Clerk** to assist. The Parish Council would plant bulbs along the Church Road border of the burial ground to complement the bulb planting on the opposite side of the road planned by the Fernhurst Horticultural Society.

**160/26 To consider proposed revision to the grant application policy and application form**

A revised Grant Awarding Policy and 2026 Grant Application Form had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting and was discussed.

**RESOLVED: To approve revised Grant Awarding Policy and 2026 Grant Application Form with the amendments made at the meeting**

The approved documents have been included as Appendices B and C. **ACTION: Clerk** to circulate new documents to Parish organisations.

**161/26 To consider the submission of a grant application to Chichester District Council for the replacement of fencing and the provision shading at the Parish Council playground**

Preparation of a possible application to Chichester District Council for a grant 50% of the cost of new fencing and the provision of shading at the Parish Council playground would be started in time for submission by the next deadline of 27th November. No decision on whether to install the new fencing or shading was made and costs supported by quotes would be considered at the October Full Council meeting.

**162/26 To consider Parish Council Winter Plan 2026/2027** - deferred

**163/26 To consider Parish Council involvement in the Sussex 1550 celebrations in summer 2027**

An organisation, "Sussex 1550", had circulated proposals for a week of events in June 2027 to celebrate the foundation of Sussex in the year 477 AD. Discussion was deferred until the next Council meeting. **ACTION: Clerk** to circulate to local organisations and ask them if they want to adopt it for their events. **ACTION: Cllr** Bicknell to discuss with the Fernhurst Hub.

**Monthly Executive Reports/Committee Matters**

**164/26 Finance and Administration:**

a) To consider the July & August 2026 Income & Expenditure Reports

The July & August 2026 Income and Expenditure reports had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting (included as Appendices D and E). The payments and balances matched the bank statements and there were no concerns.

b) To consider the September 2026 payment schedule

The September 2026 payment schedule (included as Appendix F) had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting, along with supporting invoices, and included retrospective approval of payments made in August. The schedule was discussed.

**RESOLVED: to approve the September 2026 payment schedule**

c) To note completion of the 2025/2026 External Audit

It was noted that the 2025/2026 External Audit had been completed on 3 August 2026 and that the Council's governance and accounts had been found to follow proper practice with no concerns.

d) To consider transfer of £30,000 from the Current Account to the Deposit Account

**RESOLVED: To approve an internal transfer of funds in excess of £10,000 from the Current Account to the Deposit Account with the amount to be decided by the Clerk.**

**165/26 Planning Committee** – the last meeting had been held on Tuesday 15th September 2026. No comment from the meeting.

**166/26 Property, Highways and Environment Committee –** A meeting of the committee had been held earlier that evening. Discussion of the Crossfield Public Toilets Survey was deferred.

**167/26 Date of next meeting** – 21 October 2026

**168/26 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**

**169/26 Following the Local Government Services annual pay settlement to confirm Clerk salary for 2026/2027**

**RESOLVED: To approve payment of the Clerk salary for 2026/2027 as per the Local Government Services annual pay settlement.**

The meeting ended at 8.34 pm

**Chairman Signed: ……..**

**Date:**

Please also see documents:

**Appendix A: Update from District Council September 2026**
**Appendix B: Grant Awarding Policy adopted 16 September 2026**
**Appendix C: 2026 Grant Application Form**
**Appendix D: July 2026 Income & Expenditure Report**
**Appendix E: August 2026 Income & Expenditure Report**
**Appendix F: September 2026 Payment Schedule**