FERNHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Property, Highways and Environment Committee
Wednesday 16 September 2026

Draft Minutes

Minutes of the **Meeting of the Property, Highways and Environment Committee held on Wednesday 16 September 2026** at 6.15pm at The Hub

Councillors Present:
Cllr Peter Bellet (Chair), Cllr Heather Bicknell, Cllr John Buchanan, Cllr Margaret Jenkins, Cllr Graham Inns (arrived late), Cllr Chris Lloyd, Cllr Graeme Williamson

Also in Attendance: Mrs E Ford (Clerk)

P/28/26 Apologies For Absence
Apologies were received from Cllrs Bill Black and Cayte Pearce

P/29/26 Declaration of Interests - None

P/30/26 To Approve Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 July 2026

RESOLVED: to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Property, Highways and Environment Committee held on 15 July 2026

P/31/26 Matters arising from the previous minutes - None

P/32/26 Public Representations
A resident had contacted the Council to enquire if it was responsible for the management of Perry Wood (the woodland on the opposite side of Vann Road to the Council-owned Van Common). This followed a tree falling from the wood onto their property and as there were several more large trees growing near the boundary which were in poor condition. The Parish Council did not own this wood, nor was it responsible for its management. **ACTION: Clerk** to write to the owners of the wood to advise on the fallen tree.
A query was raised on how long would it take for the defaced illuminated bollards at the junction of the A286 and Vann Road to be replaced.

P/33/26 To receive update on the Burial Ground including:

a) To consider a replacement tree on the felling of the walnut tree
Subject to receiving Conservation Area consent the Parish Council would be felling the walnut tree in the burial ground on account of the poor health of the tree and its location by the road. It was agreed that a replacement crab apple tree would be planted.
b) To consider removal of materials on graves
An increasing amount of decorations were being placed on graves and this was impeding the grounds maintenance. It was agreed that only fresh flowers would be allowed on the graves. All other material would be removed and placed in the hedged enclosure area in the centre of the burial ground to enable collection for a period before disposal. **ACTION: Clerk** to add to the Burial Ground Regulations and publicise in the Fernhurst News.

c) To consider future capacity of burial ground
An estimate had been made that there was room for more than 80 new full burial plots in Area E of the burial ground. A new burial ground would therefore not be needed for between five and ten years. **ACTION: Clerk** to progress work to provide a new burial ground.
d) **To approve update to burial ground forms** – deferred.

P/34/26 To receive update on the Public Toilets including:

a) To consider the results of the Crossfield Public Toilets Survey
The survey had finished on 12th September with 100% of respondents replying that the Parish Council should continue to provide the public toilets at the Crossfield car park.
b) To consider new Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance for Public Toilets, in effect from 5 August 2026
The new guidance advised on the provision of public toilets for different gender identities. It was decided that the disabled toilet would be available for any person who was not able to use the ladies or gents toilets. **ACTION: Clerk** to request that the disabled toilet was unlocked during daytime opening hours and accessible with the radar key at other times.

P/35/26 To receive update on Van Common, Village Green and other Parish Council owned land including:

a) To note receipt of the 2026 survey of Parish Council trees
The report on the 2026 Survey of Parish Council owned trees had been received and identified less works that the 2024 survey. Quotes had been requested to carry out the work and would be discussed at the next Full Council meeting.
b) To consider the installation of metal tree guards for the recently planted trees at the Village Green and the Burial Ground
There was no decision on the installation of ornamental metal tree guards for the recently planted Parish Council trees.

P/36/26 To receive update on the War Memorial including:

a) To discuss the carrying out of an annual "gentle clean" of the memorial prior to Remembrance Sunday each year
The stonemason was awaiting the delivery of lime mortar to complete the re-pointing of the war memorial. The War Memorial Trust recommendation to carry out an annual "gentle clean" was discussed. **ACTION: Clerk** to request that Village Ranger carried out a "gentle clean" of the war memorial prior to Remembrance Sunday each year.

P/37/26 To receive update on the Playground
A new sign for the playground with updated emergency contact information had been received and would be installed shortly. Four quotes for replacement fencing and for new playground shading had been requested and would be discussed at the Council meeting, with a view to submitting a grant application to Chichester District Council. Although now repaired there was an option of replacing one of the picnic benches with a more accessible table and chairs set and including this in the grant application. Playsafe Playground Ltd would repair the safety matting which had been disturbed in the recent installation of the new slide.

P/38/26 To receive update on Highways including:

a) To confirm process for the submission of work requests to the new WSCC Highway Rangers pilot programme

The new WSCC Highway Rangers pilot programme, which provided 2 hours of highways maintenance to the Parish, was discussed. **ACTION: Councillors** to advise of any work to be carried out and **Clerk** to submit to the programme.

b) To note changes to Public Rights of Way Reporting

Public Rights of Way Reporting was now to be done online through the WSCC website and not using the PROW email address.

c) To discuss 2026/2027 Parish Winter Plan

The proposed Parish Council 2026/2027 Winter Plan included the same roads as the 2025/2026 Plan. No costs had been received from the contractor in time for discussion at the Full Council meeting later that evening.

P/39/26 To receive update on arrangement for the Christmas Parish Council events

A quote had been obtained for the installation of lights on the Crossfield balustrade for review at the Full Council meeting and an updated Risk Assessment would be required for the licence application to Chichester District Council along with the proof of the contractor insurance cover. A resident had offered to donate and plant a 12-14ft bare root Norway Spruce tree (the same type of tree as the Trafalgar Square Xmas tree) with ongoing maintenance. **Action: Clerk** to check licence status for the planting of the tree.

P/40/26 To receive update on Environmental Matters including:

a) To consider Parish Council actions in response to Church of England Carbon Literacy Project

Detailed notes prepared by Cllr Inns and Cllr Buchanan on the Church of England Carbon Literacy project had been circulated to Councillors in early September. There was no decision on any Parish Council actions in response to the project.

b) To consider Parish Council actions in response Chichester District Council Emergency Preparedness campaign

ACTION: Clerk to circulate the existing Parish Council Emergency Plan for review which would include consideration of the implications on the loss of landline phones. This changeover to digital only phones was reported to have commenced in the Parish and was expected to be completed in 2027.

P/41/26 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting would be 17 February 2027

Meeting closed at 7.09pm

Signed…… Date: