FERNHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Full Council Meeting
Wednesday 21 October 2026
Draft Minutes

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

Councillors Present: Cllr Peter Bellet, Cllr Heather Bicknell (Chair), Cllr Bill Black, Cllr John Buchanan, Cllr Graham Inns, Cllr Margaret Jenkins, Cllr Cayte Pearce, Cllr Rebecca Stroud-Matthews

Also in Attendance: Mrs Elizabeth Ford (Clerk).

170/26 Apologies for Absence
Apologies were received from Cllrs Lloyd and Williamson

171/26 Declaration of Interests - None

172/26 To Approve Minutes of the meeting on 16 September 2026

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the meeting on 16 September 2026

173/26 Matters Arising from the Minutes
A plan showing the boundary of woodland owned by the Hyde Housing Group between the Nappers Wood housing estate and Van Common had been obtained by the Council.

174/26 Public Representations
Cllr Inns presented a history of the development of the Nappers Wood housing estate, now owned by the Hyde Housing Group, and his involvement as a volunteer Customer Involvement representative since 1998 and Chair of a Nappers Wood residents group. The Chair thanked Cllr Inns for the great amount of work he had done for the village.

175/26 County Council Commentary – No report to meeting

176/26 District Council Commentary
Cllr Burkhart had provided a written report prior to the meeting (see Appendix A). Applications were now open for free trees plus support materials for new tree planting projects. The roll out of food waste collections to properties with shared bins would be starting in October and all would have collections by March 2027

177/26 To consider the beneficiary of donations collected at the Fernhurst Christmas Lights Event on 1st December 2026

RESOLVED: the Fernhurst Scout Group would be the beneficiary of the donations collected by the Parish Council at the Fernhurst Christmas Lights Event on 1st December 2026

178/26 To consider update on the preparation of the proposed 2027/2028 Budget - proposal to be considered in detail at the 18th November 2026 Full Council Meeting
The meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee on 19th October had examined in detail a proposal for the 2027/2028 budget. There would be further detailed discussion of the budget at the 18th November Full Council meeting and decision on the 2027/2028 budget and precept at the 13th January 2027 Full Council meeting. **ACTION: Clerk** to add three year projection of income and expenditure to budget proposal figures in time for the November Council meeting.

179/26 To consider a Fernhurst Parish screening of the film "National Emergency Briefing on Climate & Nature" on Saturday 16th January 2027

Following a request by District Cllr Newbery the Parish Council agreed to organise a screening of the film "National Emergency Briefing on Climate & Nature" on Saturday 16th January 2027 in Fernhurst Village Hall. Cllr Newbery would co-chair the discussion after the screening.

RESOLVED: To accept quote for £32 exc VAT from Blackdown Printing for the supply of 50 flyers.
RESOLVED: To cover costs of the booking of the hall and a maximum budget of £100 for the provision of refreshments for the event

ACTION: Clerk to liaise with Cllr Newbery regarding placing of advert in the December edition of the Fernhurst News and the distribution of the flyers. **ACTION: Clerk** to liaise with Rev Liz Yonge regarding arrangements.

180/26 To consider quotes for the replacement of fencing and options for the provision shading at the Parish Council playground

Quotes had been requested from five contractors for new fencing and/or the provision of a shade sail at the Parish Council playground. Three quotes for the provision of new fencing were discussed.

RESOLVED: to select Valley Projects Ltd as the preferred bidder to supply and install new 1.8m high, heavy gauge, metal fencing and new self-closing gate at the playground as per quote ref. 3360 - Play Area Fencing at a cost of £20,395 exc VAT with decision on whether to instruct the works to be made at February 2027 Full Parish Council meeting following the Chichester District Council grant award panel on 27th January 2027.

A recent meeting of the Fernhurst Recreation Ground Trust Management Committee had approved the proposed new fencing but had objected to the installation of a shade sail. Two quotes had already been obtained for a shade sail at a cost in excess of £10K. It was decided that the option of using a shade sail would therefore not be progressed. **ACTION: Cllr Buchanan and the Clerk** to look at options for the planting of trees to provide shade.

181/26 To consider Parish Council Winter Plan 2026/2027

West Sussex County Council had made an agreement with ACS Contractors for the additional snow clearance of several local roads in the event of a WSCC defined severe winter event. WSCC would pay the contractor £58 per hour with the Parish Council paying the balance.

RESOLVED: to approve a budget of £2.5K for Parish Council funded snow clearance in winter 2026/2027.

The Parish Council funded snow clearance would only take place in severe weather and would be in addition to the routine winter service network clearance by WSCC on the A286, Vann Road and Marley Lane up to the entrance to St Magnus Hospital. Information on the roads to be cleared and other winter resilience measures were available in The Parish Winter Plan - see Parish Council website.

182/26 To consider the Crossfield Public Toilets Survey

By 14th September the Parish Council had received a total of 95 responses either online or in person to the survey. The majority of respondents were living in the village. The survey was considered a success in both obtaining feedback on the Parish Council provision of public toilets and in engaging with the community. A summary of the results had been included in the November edition of the Fernhurst News and key was that 100% of respondents said that they thought that the public toilets should remain open.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain costs for improved highway signage to the carpark, shops and toilets.
ACTION: Cllr Pearce to prepare a summary of the comments included in survey responses.

183/26 To note update on Local Government Reorganisation and the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority

Cllr Buchanan and the Clerk had attended the All Parishes meeting at Chichester District Council on Monday 12th October. Although LGR was on hold until completion of a Government review there was a strong message from Government that it would go ahead. District Council elections would go ahead in May 2027 under existing Council boundaries. Elections for the Mayor of Sussex and Brighton would take place in May 2028 and preparations were proceeding as planned under the newly created Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority.

184/26 Update on the Sussex 1550 celebrations in summer 2027

The Fernhurst Hub would hold a Sussex 1550 celebration as its summer party in June 2027.

Monthly Executive Reports/Committee Matters

185/26 Finance and Administration:

a) To consider the September 2026 Income & Expenditure Report

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

b) To approve the July, August and September 2026 Bank Reconciliations.

The reconciliations had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting with supporting bank statements and were discussed.

RESOLVED: to approve July, August and September 2026 Bank Reconciliations

c) To approve the October 2026 payment schedule

An updated October 2026 payment schedule was presented to the meeting (included as Appendix C) and was discussed.

RESOLVED: to approve the October 2026 payment schedule

d) To note that a Letter of Engagement has been issued to Auditing Solutions Ltd for the 2026/2027 internal audit – interim internal audit in w/c 2 November 2026

It was noted that a Letter of Engagement has been issued to Auditing Solutions Ltd for the 2026/2027 internal audit.

e) To consider approval of the revised Standing Orders

RESOLVED: to approve the revised Standing Orders (see Appendix D)

f) To consider approval the revised Financial Regulations

RESOLVED: to approve the revised Financial Regulations (see Appendix E)

186/26 Planning Committee

a) To consider approval of the Committee Terms of Reference

RESOLVED: to approve the Planning Committee Terms of Reference (included as Appendix F)

b) Chair's comments

Cllr Buchanan summarised the changes in the new National Planning Policy Framework, which had been published in August 2026. Chichester District Council would be implementing the new National Scheme of Delegation from 31st October 2026 and this would also apply to all planning applications in the South Downs National Park unless they were "called in" by the

South Downs National Park Authority. The Parish Council Planning Committee would hold additional meetings so that the Council comment could be submitted at an earlier stage in the Planning Authority evaluation of applications. **ACTION: Clerk** to circulate notes on Planning Training to Councillors.

187/26 Property, Highways and Environment Committee

a) To note review of assets

Cllr Bellet and the Village Ranger had carried out a check of all Parish Council assets in early October. The majority of assets were found to be in good order with just one bench in need of minor repair plus repair of the roof of the bus shelter opposite the school.

b) Chair update on committee projects & maintenance programmes

Cllr Bellet presented a report on the business of the Committee. It was noted that Chichester District Council would only collect litter and not green waste from community clean-up events and that the use of overly large bags should be avoided. **ACTION: Clerk** to circulate Committee notes. **ACTION: Councillors** to advise Clerk of the locations of waste bins. Chichester District Council had provided an additional bin at Crossfield but advised that a bin elsewhere in the Parish would need to be removed.

RESOLVED: to propose to Chichester District Council that the bin to be removed should be the one by the bench on Church Road between the entrance to the Vicarage and the church.

188/26 Date of next meeting – 18 November 2026

189/26 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

Cllr Stroud-Matthews left the meeting

190/26 To discuss confidential business

The confidential business was discussed.

Cllr Jenkins left the meeting

The meeting ended at 9.20 pm

Chairman Signed: ……..

Date:

Please also see documents:

Appendix A: Update from District Council October 2026
Appendix B: September 2026 Income & Expenditure Report
Appendix C: October 2026 Payment Schedule
Appendix D: Approved Standing Orders
Appendix E: Approved Financial Regulations
Appendix F: Terms of Reference of the Planning Committee