

Findon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Monday 23 June 2025 at 7.30pm in Nepcote Hall

Present: Cllrs Smith (Chairman), Wilson, Dean, Hellett, Peskett, Kenna, and Whitby

In Attendance: Clerk Miss F MacLeod, West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Cllr Urquhart, and a member of the public.

Item No		<u>Action By</u>
25.63	To receive and note apologies for absence	
	Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Gilbert.	
25.64	Chairman's announcements	
	None.	
25.65	Declarations of Interest on items on the Agenda	
	Cllrs Wilson and Whitby declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 25.74 b) as they had expenses for payment approval. Cllrs Wilson and Whitby would leave the meeting and take no part in any discussion. Cllr Wilson had stepped down as a Governor at the Findon Village Pre-School and would update his Register of Interests accordingly.	
25.66	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 29/5/2025	
	It was proposed and seconded that the minutes dated 29 May 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman.	
25.67	Update on implementation of actions not covered elsewhere on the Agenda	
	The report was noted and updated.	
25.68	To receive a report from WSCC	
	Cllr Urquhart reported on the devolution progress and dates. An election for a Mayor would take place in May 2026 with strategic powers for the whole of Sussex. The new unitary authority elections would take place in April 2027. WSCC was in discussion with existing District and Borough councils and working up a high-level Business Case. WSCC would also be engaging with parish councils and local communities.	
25.69	Public Question Time (PQT)	
	PQT opened at 7.44pm. A resident from School Hill raised the amount of two way traffic and overgrown vegetation on School Hill. PQT closed at 7.45pm.	
25.70	Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25	
	The Clerk reported that as the Internal Audit report had not yet been received by the time of this meeting, an extraordinary meeting had been arranged for the 26 June 2025 for this item.	
25.71	Reports from Working Groups and Outside Bodies for noting/ratifying	
	a) Open Spaces Working Group Lead Cllr Whitby introduced the report (as previously circulated) and reported that a new bench in memory of Peter Goldsworthy would be installed at the Findon Village Hall. Volunteers needed for the Saturday Working Party would be mentioned in the August	

	<p>edition of Findon News. Attention was drawn to the preparation of the key holder schedule.</p> <p>b) Trees Working Group Lead Cllr Wilson reported that the community orchard was getting well established. Cllrs Wilson and Smith to arrange a small event for councillors to view the orchard. Tree staking was underway, and a meeting with the Trees Group would be held on 24 June 2025. A second community orchard was planned for Nepcote Green in 2026.</p> <p>c) Allotment Gardens Lead Cllr Wilson reported Arun District Council (ADC) had agreed to new fencing. It was noted that some allotment holders appeared to be subletting their plots which was against the terms of the Tenancy Agreement. This would be brought to the attention of all plot holders.</p> <p>d) Village Hall Trust. Cllr Smith introduced the report (as previously circulated) regarding the resurfacing of the Village Hall car park utilising the ringfenced balance of £14,616.00 of the Public Works Loan funding for the Nepcote Hall extension. The total cost to resurface the whole car park was £15850.00 excl VAT and FPC would have the contract with the supplier and manage the project. Resolved: that Findon Parish Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appoints Thompson Civil Engineering as the contractor for resurfacing the whole Village Hall car park; 2. Contributes £14616.00 excl VAT towards the total cost; 3. Does not support a shortfall grant requested by Findon Village Hall Trust; and 4. Appoints Cllr Hellett as project manager. <p>e) Community Resilience Plan (CRP). The resilience equipment would be moved to a more prominent location in the Wattle House after the Sheep Fair in September 2025.</p> <p>f) Roads/Parking/Village Signage Working Group Lead Cllr Kenna introduced the report (as previously circulated). Regarding reducing the speed limit on Nepcote Lane to Cissbury Ring to 20mph, WSCC Cllr Urquhart advised that if speed humps were introduced as part of the measures, then street lighting would be needed. This would impact of Dark Night Skies. The resident of School Hill was invited to join the Group for survey activities. The potential for use of the Village Hall car park and access for drop off and pick up times was still under discussion following Cllr Smith's meeting with members of the St John the Baptist School.</p> <p>g) Assets of Community Value (ACV) No update.</p> <p>h) Wattle House Feasibility Study Working Group Response waited from the SDNPA on the pre-application advice request. Cllr Gilbert would commence the preliminary Feasibility Study in July 2025.</p>	
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	<p>i) Findon Village Pre-School Portacabin Working Group Lead Cllr Hellett confirmed due diligence had been carried out with the chosen contractor (Bristow's simply smooth plastering & renovations) and the contract had been circulated to councillors prior to signing at the meeting. Cllr Smith advised that the Chairman of Findon Village Stores had indicated that up to £10k had been earmarked for the repair to the Pre-School roof and to be spent by 31 July 2025. It was suggested that this would allow up to £10k of the previously agreed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocated funds of £31k to be used for other parish initiatives. A point was made that FPC owned the portacabin asset and had an obligation to carry out external repairs. An alternative could be for the Village Stores to make a donation of up to £10k to FPC instead and FPC fully funds the repair of the Pre-School roof using the CIL money.</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council:</p> <p>1) Approves and signs the contract with Bristow's for repair work on the Pre-School roof; and</p> <p>2) Approaches the Village Stores for clarity on a donation to FPC.</p> <p>j) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Group No update.</p> <p>Cllr Urquhart left the meeting at 8.37pm.</p>	SS
25.72	Clerk Report	
	<p>The Clerk referred to the report (as previously circulated) and drew attention to para 1.3 of the report regarding the damaged Sycamore tree on Pond Green. Cllr Wilson would contact Connick Tree Care for expert advice.</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council instructs the Clerk to place an order for a double-sided medium FPC branded feather flag and cross base with water ring with a budget of £250.00</p>	JW FM
25.73	Reports from FPC Committees for noting/ratifying	
	a) Planning	
	No update.	
	b) Finance & Governance	
	No update.	
25.74	Finance	
	<p>a) Receipts and bank reconciliation The bank reconciliation for May 2025 (as previously circulated) was noted and approved. Cllrs Whitby and Wilson left the meeting at 8.41pm and took no part in the discussion.</p> <p>b) Payments The payments of £3879.81 to date for June 2025 (as previously circulated) were noted and approved. Cllrs Whitby and Wilson rejoined the meeting at 8.42pm</p> <p>c) To note quarterly budget Not available.</p>	

25.75	Items to be referred to next Agenda not already included in the minutes	
	<p>Sheep Fair stall in the Wattle House, and formation of a long term plan for FPC and the Pre-School.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.46pm – date of next meeting 28 July 2025.</p>	