

Findon Parish Council

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Monday 19 January 2026
at 7.30pm in Nepcote Hall**

Present: Cllrs Smith (Chairman), Wilson, Gilbert, Hellett, Whitby, Kenna, Dean, Peskett, Gardner (part), Jagfeldt (part), and Silver (part).

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

Item No		<u>Action By</u>
26.01	To receive and note apologies for absence	
	None.	
26.02	Chairman’s announcements	
	Cllr Peskett had been appointed as Chairman of the Finance & Governance Committee.	
26.03	Declarations of Interest on items on the Agenda	
	Cllr Peskett declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 26.10 a regarding the additional dog bin as owner of Findon Manor Hotel. Cllr Peskett would leave the meeting when the dog bin was considered under para 2.1 of the report. Cllrs Wilson and Kenna declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 26.16 b as they had expenses for payment approval. Cllrs Wilson and Kenna would leave the meeting and take no part in any discussion.	
26.04	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 01/12/2025	
	It was proposed and seconded that the minutes dated 1 December 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman.	
26.05	Update on implementation of actions not covered elsewhere on the Agenda	
	The report was noted.	
26.06	To receive a report from WSSC and Arun District Council (ADC) Councillors	
	<p>WSSC Cllr Urquhart updated on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSSC Children’s Services had received a good report from OFSTED; • Ship overboard containers had now floated towards East Sussex. WSSC/ADC and Chichester Council had worked in co-ordination to assist with the clearance of West Sussex containers, and a meeting would take place with the Marine Conservation Society to assess impact; • The West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (part of the planning system) would be taken to Cabinet for approval in February 2026; • Shortened: lol81khalat2 v13 cSE dSH vid 90 MM tm1walk tm2taichilen pfb aMs gM 16x9 30 12 25 was a link to the new food waste recycling initiative; • Took part in a key stakeholder Teams call regarding proposed closures of Long Furlong which Cllr Kenna also took part in; and 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed that WSCC Highways accepted responsibility for the weedkiller sprayed on some village verges. 	
26.07	Public Question Time (PQT)	
	<p>PQT opened at 7.42pm.</p> <p>Two residents close to Pond Green welcomed the recently planted replacement trees, however they raised concerns regarding the proposed Roundhouse and the potential for anti-social behaviour as emailed to the Clerk and Cllr Dean. Cllr Dean advised that the Roundhouse was only at evaluation stage, hence the survey to residents and Pond Green user groups for feedback prior to any request for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. One resident referred to alleged cannabis use on Pond Green however this had not been reported. Cllr Dean had already contacted the Findon PCSO prior to the meeting and there had been no evidence of anti-social behaviour in the area. <i>(please see Agenda item 26.10 i) for an update)</i></p> <p>PQT closed at 7.53pm.</p>	
26.08	Councillor vacancies	
	<p>Three candidates were considered at the meeting for the three co-option vacancies on the Council. At the invitation of the Chairman, Alan Gardner, Agneta Jagfeldt, and Phil Silver separately provided background to their applications. All candidates left the meeting and, following a vote, all three were unanimously co-opted to the Council.</p> <p>Resolved: the Findon Parish Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Co-opts Alan Gardner, Agneta Jagfeldt, and Phil Silver to the Council with immediate effect; and Appoints Alan Gardner, Agneta Jagfeldt, and Phil Silver to the Planning Committee. <p>All three councillors completed their Declaration of Office and joined the meeting.</p>	
26.09	Precept/Budget for 2026/27	
	<p>Cllr Peskett introduced the report (as previously circulated) and financial paperwork (as previously circulated to councillors). Cllr Peskett provided background to various precept and budget lines following discussion at the Finance & Governance Committee meeting held on 8 January 2026. It was further agreed to increase the precept line for dog and litter bin maintenance to £1500.00. Cllr Hellett would discuss hall hire charges at the next FVH Committee meeting. The precept proposal was considered to be a responsible measure to allow for day-to-day spending and replenishment of reserves.</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Approves the revised Precept/Budget table and Summary Position as circulated to councillors and set out in the report; and Instructs the Clerk to confirm the precept requirement of £75k for 2026/27 to Arun District Council by 28 January 2026. 	FM
26.10	Reports from Working Groups and Outside Bodies for noting/ratifying	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Open Spaces Working Group Lead Cllr Whitby introduced the report (as previously circulated) and drew attention to the provision and maintenance of a new dog bin as requested by Findon Manor Hotel. Speaking as a member of the public at 8.26pm, David Peskett referred to the need for the 	

	<p>bin for disposal of dog waste left in and around the Hotel grounds and was happy to make a donation of £250.00 towards the purchase of a new bin.</p> <p>Cllr Peskett left the meeting at 8.27pm and took no part in the discussion on para 2.1 of the report, and a vote then took place on the proposal.</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council accepts the donation of £250.00 from Findon Manor Hotel towards the cost of a new dog bin, with ongoing maintenance costs to be borne by the Council.</p> <p>Cllr Peskett rejoined the meeting at 8.30pm.</p> <p>b. Trees Working Group including Community Orchard</p> <p>Lead Cllr Wilson reported that five more apple trees had been planted in the Community Orchard, and saplings would be available to villagers and also planted throughout the village. A meeting would be arranged with the Findon Tree Warden to discuss the tree work priority and request three quotes. Ten trees across the village had been identified for work and they would be checked for any memorial information.</p> <p>c. Allotment Gardens</p> <p>The Clerk received a phone call from ADC Cllr Bicknell just before the Xmas break regarding various assumptions as to ownership of and permission to use the land. This referred to the long term discussions regarding the reimbursement for the dangerous tree on ADC land that FPC had felled in May 2023. No written confirmation of the conversation had been received from Cllr Bicknell to date.</p> <p>d. Village Hall Trust.</p> <p>No update.</p> <p>e. Community Resilience Plan (CRP).</p> <p>No update.</p> <p>f. Roads and Parking Working Group</p> <p>Lead Cllr Kenna introduced the report (as previously circulated) and reported that the St John the Baptist School Head Teacher would like to be involved with the TRO process for School Hill. In response to a question, Cllr Kenna would invite the Findon PCSO to ‘police’ any parking on double yellow lines, if implemented. Cllr Dean would contact the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) regarding the resurfacing of the car park at Pond Green. There was the potential for bike racks and access materials to be included.</p> <p>g. Wattle House Feasibility Study Working Group</p> <p>Lead Cllr Gilbert introduced the report (as previously circulated) and advised that a very positive conversation was had with Hannah Kay, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) as FPC was looking for a minimum of £500k (95% cost) from HLF. FPC would fund consultancy and professional fees. Priorities for HLF funding was community support, educational use by schools etc, production of a Business/Project Plan, ongoing viability. Cllr Smith offered to produce the Business/Project Plan. A presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting on 27 April 2026 would support community</p>	
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	<p>engagement.</p> <p>h. FPC and the Findon Village Pre-School Working Group Cllr Peskett reported that a meeting would be held on 27 January 2026 covering regularisation negotiations regarding the lease and rental etc.</p> <p>i. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Group Lead Cllr Dean introduced the report (as previously circulated) and drew attention to the responses and feedback in para 3.1 to the report regarding the Roundhouse proposal. Discussion took place regarding the Roundhouse and play equipment on Pond Green. Following a vote, the Roundhouse and play equipment proposals were not supported.</p>	
26.11	Grass cutting Tender process	
	Lead Cllr Hellett reported that the Tender responses were due at the end of January 2026 and it was highly likely that an extra-ordinary FPC would be needed in February 2026 to consider the Tenders for approval.	
26.12	Nepcote Green Pond	
	<p>Lead Cllr Gilbert introduced the report (as previously circulated) relating to wildflower planting adjacent to the Pond.</p> <p>Resolved: that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wildflower planting should take place on the green banks adjacent to the Pond; and 2. FPC agrees to the SDNPA introducing a ‘rewilding strip’ of approx. 5m to the northern edge of the Green with its boundary to Nepcote Green running to the east side of the Pond. 	
26.13	Village Defibrillators	
	The Clerk reported that dates for the annual service were awaited from Defib4life and that the Defibrillator at the Village Hall would be included and reimbursed accordingly. Signage was proposed to highlight the location of the Black Horse defibrillator.	JW
26.14	Clerk Report	
	<p>The Clerk referred to the report (as previously circulated).</p> <p>Resolved: that Findon Parish Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delegates approval of any vired funds to the FPC Chairman and Finance & Governance Chairman as outlined in para 1.2 of the report; and 2. Ratifies the recommendation by the Finance & Governance Committee regarding the use of Scribe software as outlined in para 1.3 of the report. 	FM
26.15	Reports from FPC Committees for noting/ratifying	
	a) Planning	
	No update.	
	b) Finance & Governance	
	No further update following meeting on 8 January 2026.	
26.16	Finance	
	<p>a) Receipts and bank reconciliation</p> <p>The bank reconciliation for December 2025 (as previously circulated) was noted and approved.</p> <p>Cllrs Kenna and Wilson left the meeting at 9.19pm and took no part in the</p>	

Unconfirmed Minutes – to be confirmed at the next Council meeting

	<p>discussion.</p> <p>b) Payments The payments of £1854.26 to date for January 2026 (as previously circulated) were noted and approved. Two new payments of £12.19 for Arun Business Supplies and £65.62 for Cllr Wilson were approved. Cllrs Kenna and Wilson rejoined the meeting at 9.21pm.</p> <p>c) Quarterly reporting to 31 December 2026 The report was noted.</p>	
26.17	Items to be referred to next Agenda not already included in the minutes	
	<p>Interpretation Boards for Pond Green and Nephote Green; draft FPC Communications Policy; grant alignment process.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.25pm – date of next meeting 16 March 2026.</p>	