

Findon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Monday 22 June 2026 at 7.30pm in Nepcote Hall

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

In Attendance: Clerk Miss F MacLeod, West Sussex County Council (WSSC) Cllr Urquhart.

Item No		<u>Action By</u>
26.63	To receive and note apologies for absence	
	Apologies were received and noted from Cllrs Gilbert and Peskett.	
26.64	Chairman's announcements	
	None.	
26.65	Declarations of Interest on items on the Agenda	
	Cllr Wilson declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 26.78 b for an expenses claim. Cllr Wilson would leave the meeting for that item and take no part in any discussion.	
26.66	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18/5/26	
	It was proposed and seconded that the minutes dated 18 May 2026 be approved and signed by the Chairman.	
26.67	Update on implementation of actions not covered elsewhere on the Agenda	
	The report was noted.	
	Due to the number of residents in attendance for Agenda item 26.69, it was agreed to take this item at 7.34pm.	
26.69	South Downs Local Plan Regulation 19 Public Consultation	
	The Chairman invited Mr Hide to speak on behalf of the residents regarding the inclusion of SDA51 land south of Findon/Wyatts Field and a resident regarding AR068 land south of Soldiers Field House as site allocations in the Reg 19 and the soundness of the Plan. Key points re SDA51: • Request FPC submit objection to SDNPA (rejected previously, not included in Reg 18 consultation, what had changed to now include in Reg 19, lack of consultation); • Location not justified or deliverable; • Location contributed to the setting of Nepcote and the Conservation Area made by the SDNPA in 2023; • SDA51 should be removed from the Plan; and • 600 residents support the above actions. Key points re AR068: • Request FPC submit objection to SDNPA (not included in Reg 18 consultation, lack of consultation in Reg 19); • The land abuts the Conservation Area made by the SDNPA in 2023; and • Does not conform to SDNPA aims and policies The Chairman thanked Mr Hide, Mr Leitch, and residents for their input, and highlighted the valid point that the Plan had not gone through due	

	process for consultation for both these locations. Following a vote, FPC agreed to support both SDA51 and AR068 representations. Cllr Hellett abstained. WSCC Cllr Urquhart also thanked the speakers for their hard work, with particular reference to the settlement boundary impact on SDA51, and would support their representation. Resolved: that Findon Parish Council 1. objects to the Plan Reg 19 consultation due to the process being unsound for the above reasons; and 2. supports the residents' representations regarding SDA51 and AR068.	
26.70	Public Question Time (PQT)	
	PQT opened at 8.03pm. Reference was made to the condition of some trees and overgrown vegetation on the south side of School Hill. FPC would approach the appropriate landowners in writing. In response to a question for an update on parking in the village centre, Cllr Kenna advised that WSCC were now happy with the TRO request for yellow lines and the one-way system proposal for School Hill would be progressed. Cllr Kenna took note of dangerous parking near the Black Horse and in the High Street. In response to a question on planning, Cllr Hellett advised that the planning application for SDNP/26/02327/FUL land east of Pony Farm would be considered at the Planning Committee meeting on 25 June 2026. PQT closed at 8.12pm.	FM
26.68	To receive a report from WSCC Councillor Urquhart (8.12pm)	
	Following the elections in May 2026, there was no overall control of WSCC, however an alliance of various political parties was in place with a lot of new councillors. The Secretary of State was pushing ahead with the Local Government Review for the creation of two Unitary Authorities. Several Authorities were holding Judicial Reviews and, following Sir Kier Starmer's resignation, could depend on the incumbent Prime Minister to determine the way forward.	
26.71	Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26	
	The Clerk provided background to the documentation submitted to the Internal Auditor and AGAR process. The Internal Audit reported was noted to be satisfactory and councillors had viewed the AGAR documents. Resolved: that 1. Findon Parish Council notes and welcomes the Internal Audit report; 2. Findon Parish Council approves Section 1 Annual Governance Statement of 2025/26 and that Section 1 be signed by the Chairman and Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer prior to submission for external audit; 3. Findon Parish Council approves Section 2 Accounting Statements of 2025/26 and that Section 2 be signed by the Chairman and Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer prior to submission for external audit; and 4. the Clerk sends the completed AGAR documentation to the external auditors, and publishes the relevant documentation on the Notice Boards and web site to meet the required deadline.	FM

26.72	Harmonisation of Village Grants Process.	
	Cllr Smith referred to the letter (as previously circulated to councillors) that was now ready to be sent to key interested parties in the grant funding allocations process and made clear that the proposed portal would not be in the ownership of FPC but was an enabler for the parties. A meeting would be arranged with Maureen Chaffe, Processmatters2, to facilitate the harmonised grants portal and GDPR elements. Resolved: that the Clerk sends the final version of the letter to all key interested parties.	FM
26.73	Reports from Working Groups and Outside Bodies for noting/ratifying	
	a. Open Spaces Working Group No update. Cllr Silver to contact Nick Keating regarding Working Group reports and liaise with Cllr Wilson. b. Trees Working Group including Community Orchard Cllr Wilson updated that he had received reports of damage to trees including the Pond Green Magnolia. Cllr Smith referred to a large tree affected by the Soldiers Field House construction work and Cllr Silver referred to the demolition of potentially dead/dying trees at The Chase. The Findon Tree Warden would be asked to review. The bi-annual Tree Survey would be reviewed and prioritised for upcoming tree works. c. Allotment Gardens The Clerk had recently received an email from the ADC Deputy Chief Exec suggesting that FPC and ADC put the leasing of the allotments to FPC from ADC on a formal basis. The Clerk would request further information from ADC to explore this option and understand the financial/resource implications at a future Council meeting. d. Village Hall Trust. No update. e. Community Resilience Plan (CRP). No update. f. Roads and Parking Working Group Lead Cllr Kenna reported on the latest roadworks to take place on the A24 at Findon Valley in mid-July 2026, with three-way temporary traffic lights. This information would be included in the July edition of Findon News. Men In Sheds signage for Cissbury Ring Road would be completed in July, and local riding stables and National Trust would be contacted for their support for the speed reduction. Cllr Dean had contacted WSCC on School Hill one way options and the deadline for the Community TRO application was 30 July 2026. Feedback on the Nepcote car park, owned by the Parish Council, would be covered at the Wattle House 'Thinking Day' event on 15 July 2026. It was confirmed that the Pond Green car park was owned by WSCC. WSCC Cllr Urquhart advised that as each parking space would cost £10k, funding was unlikely from WSCC or CIL. g. Wattle House Feasibility Study Working Group Cllr Dean advised that a suitable facilitator had been appointed for a fee not to exceed £1k as previously agreed. Posters for the event	

	would be highlighted in local magazines such as Findon News, local shops, organisations, Notice Boards, web sites etc. Connecting Spaces Ltd would provide a detailed report from the event with comments identified at post code level to meet the specific requirements for engagement needed for the Heritage Lottery Fund application. h. FPC and the Findon Village Pre-School Working Group No update. i. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Group Lead Cllr Dean introduced the reports (as previously circulated) regarding the Interpretation/Notice Boards, and the goalpost and netting. The Boards had been finalised with a six-week manufacturing lead time. Cllr Dean confirmed that the existing goal was 12 foot wide and the new goal was 2ft higher following health & safety advice. The total cost including installation was £2138.00 excl VAT. Following discussion, it was agreed to wait until the CIL funding decision in Autumn 2026. An article would be included in a future Findon News edition for a call for projects.	
26.74	Village Defibrillators	
	Cllrs Wilson was still progressing the relocation of the Black Horse defibrillator with the help of Cllr Gardner. The Chase would be considered as a potential location for the spare defibrillator. A monthly visual check of the FPC defibrillators would be put in place. The Clerk would investigate an appropriate form.	FM
26.75	Village Shop Notice Board	
	Cllr Dean introduced the report (as previously circulated). Due to the additional Community Notice Board with the Interpretation Board for Pond Green, only two new wall mounted large Notice Boards would be needed i.e. one for FPC documentation and one for the Village Stores advertising. Cllr Wilson to take this on and liaise with the Village Stores regarding costs.	
26.76	Clerk Report	
	The Clerk referred to the report (as previously circulated) which was noted.	
26.77	Reports from FPC Committees for noting/ratifying	
	a) Planning	
	No update.	
	b) Finance & Governance	
	No update.	
26.78	Finance	
	a) Receipts and bank reconciliations The bank reconciliation for May 2026 (as previously circulated) was noted and approved. b) Payments Cllr Wilson left the meeting at 9.05pm and took no part in any discussions The payments of £5296.02 to date for June 2026 (as previously circulated) were noted and approved. Cllr Wilson rejoined the meeting at 9.07pm	
26.79	Items to be referred to next Agenda not already included in the minutes	
	Cllr Smith – Communications Strategy The meeting closed at 9.10pm – date of next meeting 27 July 2026.	