

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Farningham held at Shand Hall, High Street, Farningham on Wednesday 11th June 2025 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Daryl Burns (Chair), Philip McGarvey and Carol Salmon and Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) Cllrs Laurence Ball.

In attendance: three members of the public (in part) and Helen Penney (Clerk).

1. Apologies for absence.

Farningham Parish Councillors (FPC) Liz Bourne, Andie Fitzsimons and Kevin McGeough. SDC Cllr Alan White and Kent County Councillor (KCC) Marc Logen.

2. Co-option.

None.

3. Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.

None.

4. To consider, and approve if appropriate, agenda items sufficiently confidential as to warrant exclusion of members of the press and public under the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

None.

5. Trident.

Cllr Salmon.

6. Report from the County Councillor.

In his absence, the Clerk advised that Cllr Logen is due to meet with the KCC Highways team next week to discuss the Highways Improvement Programme.

7. Report from District Councillors.

Cllr Ball reported that a new political group has formed at SDC called the West Kent Independents meaning that no single party now has overall control of the council as the Conservative Party still hold the most seats but this is below 50%.

Cllr Ball advised that the next significant deadline for Devolution is in November 2025 however KCC have requested an extension which is still to be confirmed or discarded.

Cllr Ball reported that the appeal for Chimmens Solar Farm starts next week on Tuesday 17th June.

8. A Public Open Session. Members of the public will be welcome to address the Parish Council with any local concerns they have. Please note that each speaker will be allocated a maximum of three minutes and at the discretion of the Chair.

One member of the public asked for an update on highways projects and advised that, since the River Darent Medical Group moved most of its pharmacy services to Braeside, traffic on

White Post Hill has roughly doubled. They also noted a big increase in vehicles making illegal right turns onto the A20.

The next member of the public raised concerns about the new fence that has been installed next to the river at The Lion Hotel adding that the workmanship appeared poor, with loose joins and holes in the structure of the fence and sharp edges on the posts and rails adding that the fence is unlikely to last long and could pose a risk of injury if it fails.

Members asked the Clerk to contact the manager of The Lion Hotel to find out whether the installation is complete, as the structure may still be strengthened, and to make them aware of the concerns raised about workmanship. Cllr McGarvey advised that this concern was also raised a few years ago. Members also requested that the Clerk investigate that the proper planning processes have been followed as the fence sits within the curtilage of The Lion Hotel (a listed building) and cattle screen (a listed monument) and within Farningham's conservation area. This should include confirming whether a Flood Risk Activity Permit, or exemption, has been discussed with the Environment Agency and if there are any implications for the Public Right of Way team at KCC. **Action: Clerk.**

The final member of the public advised that they have an interest in the planning application for Farningham Oak and can make comments, if necessary, when it is discussed.

9. Approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting on the 14th May 2025.

The draft minutes from 14th May 2025 were recorded as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

10. Clerks report.

The Clerk reported that an update from the Brands Hatch Liaison meeting included information on motor bikes congregating in the A20 layby opposite Scratcher's Lane and is becoming an increasing nuisance. The Police are aware of a weekly bike meet and have attended in person where tickets were issued for offences and to problem riders which has resulted in less calls to the Police so has had a positive impact. The Brands Hatch Liaison meeting also advised that next year, 2026, is Brands Hatch centenary. The list of events has not yet been finalised.

The Clerk reported that KCC does not have any policies on dogs in their parks. They encourage people to have their dogs on leads and under control in car parks but as none of the staff have any official enforcement powers, it is hard to make sure any rules are adhered to. Members noted the update and agreed to stop investigating dogs at Farningham Woods any further as SDC also has no policies which is not likely to change with devolution.

The Clerk advised that Cllr White has organised a walk along the River Darent from The Lion Hotel to Station Road in South Darent on Friday 27th June at 10:30. Mark Gallant from the North West Kent Countryside Partnership, SDC Cllr Ball and representatives from Horton Kirby and South Darent Parish Council and the Darent River Preservation Society will also attend with a representative from the Environment Agency, if someone is available. Cllr

Salmon advised that she would try and attend and the Clerk will inform the Councillors who were not at the meeting and may also be interested. **Action: Clerk.**

The Clerk reported that on 17th May 2025, PC Guest and a colleague monitored speeds in the 40mph zone between Kings roundabout and Aunty Carols. From midday to 12:45, PC Guest recorded 81 cars of which 8 were speeding and stopped. All vehicles were stopped and the drivers spoken to. PC Guest intends to repeat the speed checks once a month. Members requested that the Clerk ask the speed checks to take place during peak times. **Action: Clerk.**

The Clerk advised that an application has been advertised for licensing at the Bull Stores in Farningham and has asked if the Parish Council should be consulted. Members agreed that if there are any comments from FPC, these can be returned via delegated authority but there are no comments at this stage.

Members agreed to complete the agenda in the following order:

16. Planning.

16.1 Planning log circulated by the Clerk on 6th June 2025.

Noted.

16.2 Planning Applications. To consider any planning applications and to include any received by the Clerk after the agenda has been served to Councillors.

16.2.1 Reference: 25/00946/FUL and 25/00947/LBCALT

Site: The Old Bull Stores High Street Farningham DA4 0DG

Proposal: Amendment to Reinstatement of fire damaged building. Consists of clarification of plans and elevations and an updated heritage statement.

Comments by: 20th June 2025.

Support for both applications.

16.2.2 Reference: 25/01441/LDCEX

Site: Catahoula Fields Eglantine Lane Farningham Kent DA4 9JL

Proposal: Lawful development certificate for use of the land for the stationing of a mobile home unit

Comments by: 26th June 2025.

No response.

11. Internal audit report.

Members noted the report.

12. To review the effectiveness of the system of Internal Control. The Chair of the meeting and Clerk to sign.

Members noted the Statement of Internal Control that had been signed by the Internal Auditor during the end of year audit. Had any of the answers been 'no' further explanations would have been required.

13. To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2024-25, Section 1 of the AGAR, for the year ending 31st March 2025. The Chair of the meeting and Clerk to sign and date, plus minute reference.

The Council considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2024-25. The Chair and Clerk signed and dated the Statement on behalf of the Council.

14. To approve the accounting statements for 2024-25, Section 2 of the AGAR, for the year ending 31st March 2025 and the explanation of significant variances from last year (2023-24) to this year (2024-25). The Chair of the meeting to sign and date, plus minute reference.

The Council considered and approved the Accounting Statements and supporting documents as provided by the Responsible Financial Officer who had prior to the meeting signed and dated Section 2 of the AGAR for 2024-25. The Chairman signed and dated the Accounting Statement on behalf of the Council.

15. Note the proposed dates for the Exercise of Public Rights as selected by the Clerk.

The Council noted the period for the Exercise of Public Rights from Monday 16th June to Friday 25th July 2024.

16.3 Updates on enforcement cases and to highlight new activities or sites causing concern.

The Lion Hotel covered under agenda point 8.

16.4 To note and discuss updates to on-going work with Tibbalds and SDCs Local Plan.

The Clerk reported the next update from SDC on the Local Plan is expected at the Development and Infrastructure Advisory Committee meeting on Thursday 26th June 2025. Members noted the report from Tibbalds and requested that it be circulated to Crockenhill Parish Council and Eynsford Parish Council for their comments and for any comments from FPC to be included when responding to Tibbalds. **Action: Clerk.**

16.5 To note and discuss any Neighbourhood Plan updates.

The Clerk reported that the Neighbourhood Plan event on 2nd June was very positive. 29 members of the public had attended and 12 had signed up to receive Neighbourhood Plan updates/join the steering group and that since the 2nd June, 2 additional residents have expressed an interest in the project.

Engagement will continue at the Village fete on Saturday 14th June. Cllr McGarvey advised that he could also join FPCs stand.

The next Neighbourhood Plan event is Wednesday 25th June 6:30 to 8:30pm in Shand Hall where the following will be discussed:

- form the Steering Group
- identify working groups
- ideas for community engagement
- consultant brief and procurement

The Clerk advised that the letter to designate the whole of Farningham parish as the neighbourhood area has been submitted and approved by SDC.

17. Finance Items for noting and decision.

17.1 To approve items payable and note items paid and receipts.

Members noted that an invoice to Lothorien had been added. The items payable were approved.

17.2 Flexed budget May 2025.

Noted.

17.3 To approve vegetation being cleared and the cattle screen repointed.

Following a recent inspection of the cattle screen, Members approved Tim Germaney to return and undertake ongoing maintenance which is expected to require up to three days at the previously agreed rate of £375 per day. **Action: Clerk.**

17.4 To note work that has been identified for the flint wall at Market Meadow.

The Clerk reported that Tim Germaney has identified maintenance for the flint wall at Market Meadow. Members requested that the Clerk attempt to contact the brother of Michael Draffan who was the last surviving Trustee of the Albury Trust before his passing a few years ago. Michael's brother was appointed as the executor of Michaels Will. Michael Draffan was the last surviving Trustee of the Albury Trust before his passing a few years ago. The Clerk can also try to contact the solicitors Jon Draffan has previously mentioned to try and obtain contact details for the current Trustees.

Cllrs Burns and Salmon will also raise this matter at the next Village Hall Committee meeting, as the wall borders Market Meadow. The Clerk noted that repairs to this section of the wall are not included in FPC's budget for this year and may cost several thousand pounds. **Action: Cllr Burns and Salmon.**

18. To agree setting up a working group to community contributions from the solar farm.

Members requested that Cllr Burns try to contact Wessex Solar Energy, as the Clerk has been unsuccessful in establishing communication. Should Cllr Burns receive a positive response, a working group can be considered and established. **Action: Cllr Burns.**

19. To receive an update about the church fete and agree next steps.

The Clerk advised that organisers of the church fete are struggling due to a lack of volunteers and that it may need to evolve into a village fete with a new committee. Members agreed to advertise and talk to residents who might like to volunteer at the fete. **Action: Clerk.**

20. To receive an update from Cllr Burns on Dementia Awareness.

Cllr Burns reported that she had met with a resident who works with dementia patients and supports dementia awareness. The resident will be continuing to spread awareness by visiting the Shand Hall cafe. Once a date has been organised for dementia training, the resident will inform FPC and Members can confirm if anyone would like to attend.

21. Urgent business that occurs and requires, attention before the next meeting that may be reported at the Chairman's discretion.

None.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 9th July, 7pm.

Requests from Councillors for the next agenda due by 27th June 2025.

Items Paid

**Farningham Parish Council
PAYMENTS LIST**

Voucher	Date	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
19	02/05/2025	Planning Consultant	Tibbalds Planning & Urban Design Ltd	S	3,333.33	666.67	4,000.00
15	06/05/2025	DONATION	FPCC	X	2,200.00		2,200.00
29	12/05/2025	Telephone and Broadband charges	Talk Mobile	S	4.12	0.83	4.95
23	14/05/2025	Acrobat	Adobe Acrobat	S	16.64	3.33	19.97
24	15/05/2025	Bank charges	Handelsbanken	X	11.20		11.20
27	15/05/2025	Pension contribution	Nest Pensions	X	101.46		101.46
16	22/05/2025	Shand Hall Hire	FPCC	X	330.00		330.00
30	22/05/2025	Printing	Miss H Penney	X	5.00		5.00
31	22/05/2025	Printing	ColourFactory Kent Ltd	X	156.00		156.00
20	22/05/2025	Hall Hire	Farningham Village Hall	X	30.00		30.00
21	22/05/2025	Street Lighting maintenance contract	Streetlights	S	1,035.71	207.14	1,242.85
31	22/05/2025	Printing	ColourFactory Kent Ltd	X	99.00		99.00
26	22/05/2025	Tax/NI	HM Revenue and Customs	X	139.65		139.65
25	23/05/2025	Clerk's salary	Miss H Penney	X	1,104.72		1,104.72
42	29/05/2025	Acrobat	Adobe Acrobat	S	16.64	3.33	19.97
10	29/05/2025	Neighbourhood Plan	Aldi	X	13.94		13.94
10	29/05/2025	Neighbourhood Plan	Aldi	S	5.97	1.19	7.16
			Total		8,655.38	882.49	9,537.87

Receipts

**Farningham Parish Council
RECEIPTS LIST**

Voucher	Code	Date	Bank	Description	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
3	VAT Refund received	07/05/2025	FPC Current Account (HB)	HMRC VAT Refund	R	3,401.45		3,401.45
4	Bank Interest	30/05/2025	FPC Deposit (HB)	Bank Interest	X	70.42		70.42
				Total		3,471.87		3,471.87

Items Payable

Farningham Parish Council PAYMENTS (AWAITING AUTHORISATION) LIST

Vouche	Method	Date	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
33	BACs	11/06/2025	Scribe Accounts	Scribe Accounts	S	345.60	69.12	414.72
34	BACs	11/06/2025	Internal Audit	Mrs Julia Chamberlain	X	185.00		185.00
41	BACs	11/06/2025	Printing	Miss H Penney	X	5.00		5.00
17	BACs	11/06/2025	ICO	Miss H Penney	X	47.00		47.00
35	BACs	11/06/2025	Printing	Arc-cs Ltd	S	320.00	64.00	384.00
38	BACs	11/06/2025	Tax/NI	HM Revenue and Customs	X	139.85		139.85
40	DD	11/06/2025	Telephone and Broadband charges	Talk Mobile	S	4.12	0.83	4.95
43	DD	11/06/2025	Acrobat	Adobe Acrobat	S	16.64	3.33	19.97
28	SO	11/06/2025	Electricity supply	npower	L			
36	DD	11/06/2025	Bank charges	Handelsbanken	X			
37	DD	11/06/2025	Clerk's salary	Miss H Penney	X	1,104.72		1,104.72
39	DD	11/06/2025	Pension contribution	Nest Pensions	X	101.46		101.46
				Total		2,269.39	137.28	2,406.67

DD in Helens name

Plus £108 to Lothlorien (£90 net, £18 VAT).