

FARNHAM WITH STRATFORD ST ANDREW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 11 August 2025 at the Riverside Centre

Councillors present: Ian Norman (Chair), Rosemary Conibeer (Vice Chair), Richard Ayres, Jill Pass, Tim Plant, Richard Sayer, Annabel Warne and Jeremy Williams.

In attendance: Katherine Abbott (Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer).

1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda.

3 Reports of the District and County Councillors

Cllr Reid (SCC) had provided a written report which was noted. A written report had also been received from Cllr Noble (ESC) and this too was noted.

4 Minutes of the last Meetings

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9 June 2025 were approved without amendment.

5 Matters arising

The Clerk provided the following updates to items from the June meeting.

Item 7 – Possibility of hailing the SZC bus by residents and as mentioned in a set of Northern Transport Forum minutes. The following reply had been received from SZC “This is an aspiration of the project to utilise things such as buses etc for community groups, this will still be part of the ongoing conversations, but no firm decisions have been made on this currently. When we are in a position to take this forward, we will engage with town/parish councils and community groups to advise on the best approach.”

Item 10 – Clerk to investigate resurrection of social media. This was underway but proposals were not yet ready for the Council to consider.

Item 11 – Open Space Play Fund monies. It was unanimously agreed that the remaining £38 from the Open Space Play Fund be contributed to Riverside towards cost of the refurbishment of the children’s play equipment.

6 Questions from members of the public

Allotments – The Council had received complaints about the overgrown and unkempt state of two of the allotment plots. ACTION It was agreed that the Clerk

Signed(Chair)

Date.....

would write to the two tenants to seek their prompt attention to this and in accordance with the terms of the tenancy agreement.

Stray horses – There had been two recent incidents of up to four horses straying from their grazing field due to the fence being in a state of disrepair. ACTION It was unanimously agreed the Clerk would write to the animals' owner to seek their prompt attention to repairing the fence and to remind them of the requirements of legislation and codes of practice in this regard.

SZC HGVs – The Parish Council noted that significant and repeated issues with SZC HGVs using the lane by the Post Office stores in Farnham continued. This was not the designated route. This had been referred to SZC several times and the details of offending vehicles provided. There already existed a sign stating the lane was unsuitable for HGVs, but additional signs had been requested from SZC. Despite this, unsuitable vehicles continued to use the lane. ACTION It was agreed that an question be pre-submitted to the Southern Transport Forum by Cllr Pass who was attending the upcoming meeting.

7 To receive and note the Internal Auditor's report

The Auditor's report on his review and appraisal of the adequacy of internal control systems operating throughout the council in order to provide reasonable assurance that the council's objectives will be achieved, with reference to the effectiveness of operations, the economic and efficient use of resources, compliance with applicable policies, procedures, laws, and regulations, the safeguarding of assets and interests from losses of all kinds, including those arising from fraud, irregularity, and corruption was received. The Responsible Finance Officer was thanked for her work throughout the year, and the findings of the Auditor were welcomed and noted.

8 Discussion of community engagement and consultation with CAS support

Cllr Conibeer updated the Council on the current joint proposal with Riverside to undertake community engagement and consultation to best identify ideas for projects of community benefit based on how residents would like to see the two villages develop. The support team at CAS was also available to help, including with the tone and structure of any survey. ACTION A response was awaited from CAS on proceeding with the survey and it was agreed that Cllr Conibeer would ask if some background information could accompany the survey.

9 Quarter 1 report of expenditure and income in 2025/6

The Responsible Finance Officer presented the detailed report showing income, expenditure of unrestricted funds and the restricted funds available. This was reviewed and noted.

10 To approve a Safeguarding Policy

The Clerk had prepared a draft Policy for consideration. ACTION: It was proposed, seconded and by unanimous vote agreed that the Policy be approved. It was further agreed that Cllr Conibeer would be the Council's Safeguarding lead and that she had attended the relevant training.

Signed(Chair)

Date.....

11 To approve an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Clerk had drafted a Policy for consideration. ACTION: It was proposed, seconded and by unanimous vote agreed that the Policy be approved

20.00hrs – Cllr Sayer left the meeting due to another commitment.

12 To receive the Responsible Finance Officer's verbal report

The current unrestricted funds balance, before any invoice was authorised for payment, was £6461.19.

The current restricted funds balance was £1581.06. The Clerk had contracted a second clean of the bus shelter in the Autumn (£45) and the cleaning of the two village signs (£75), also in the Autumn, so £120 of that balance was committed.

The RFO sought authority to pay the following invoices:

- RFO/Clerk's Salary £390.10 (includes back pay to 1 April to 11 August following NJC Pay Award). The small increase in the hourly rate was noted.
- Tax £97.52

Both invoices were approved and the balance of unrestricted funds, after payment, would be £5973.57.

13 To receive the Clerk's verbal report

The Clerk sought the Council's agreement to no longer producing a log of correspondence for each meeting. This was agreed.

14 Urgent items for discussion

There were no urgent items.

15 Items for the next meeting

The September agenda would include the Internal Control Statement, an update on the financial position, appointment of an internal auditor and approval of insurance arrangements.

The Meeting closed at 8.25pm

Signed(Chair)

Date.....