

FARNHAM WITH STRATFORD ST ANDREW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 8 December 2025 at the Riverside Centre

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

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

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jill Pass.

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) and Cllr Noble (ESC) had both provided written reports which were noted.

4 Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 November 2025 were approved without amendment.

5 Matters arising

The following update to previous minutes was provided and noted:

Footpaths – A work order had been issued by SCC for the footpaths reported to it via the online reporting tool in October. The Council noted that, to date, this work had not been undertaken. **ACTION:** It was agreed to review progress on this at the next meeting.

6 Questions from members of the public

A resident had raised a concern about a large vehicle which, when parked, protruded over some of the pavement. This had been mentioned to the vehicle's owner, and the vehicle had been parked further back from the pavement.

7 Draft IT policy

The Clerk referred to the new need for Parish Councils to meet the requirements set out in paragraph 1.54 of the proper practices and advised that compliance would be tested under Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return). A draft policy had been prepared to clarify expectations for the appropriate use of equipment and systems, to raise awareness of risks associated with IT use, to help safeguard the Council's data and digital assets, to clarify what constituted acceptable and unacceptable IT use, and to outline the consequences of policy breaches.

The Parish Council reviewed the draft Policy and discussed its contents. It was proposed, seconded and by unanimous vote agreed that the Policy be adopted.

8 Code of Conduct

The Clerk reminded the Parish Council that all Councils are required to have a Councillor Code of Conduct and to review and adopt this regularly. An updated version of the Code had been prepared. The Parish Council reviewed the Code which included a guide to the provisions for registering and disclosing interests.

It was proposed, seconded and by unanimous vote agreed that the updated Code be adopted.

9 End of year report on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds

As required by East Suffolk Council, the Responsible Finance Officer had compiled a report of spend of CIL funds in 2025. This was presented to the Council to note and would be placed on the website for transparency.

10 Responsible Finance Officer's report

The RFO provided the following report.

The current balance of available CIL funds (restricted) was £1416.06. The current balance of unrestricted funds was £4181.06.

The following invoices for approval to pay were submitted to the Parish Council for consideration:

East Suffolk Services Ltd (formerly Norse) for grass cutting between April to November - £384

Clerk/RFO salary (Gross) - £413.20

Clerk/RFO WFH annual allowance - £180 (£15 x 12)

The invoices were approved and once paid, the balance of unrestricted funds would be £3203.86

Allotment rents had been received from six tenants by the deadline of 30 November (total income £77). The seventh tenant had been sent a reminder for an outstanding rent payment.

11 Clerk's report

The Clerk referred to the **planning consultation (DC/25/4382/ADN)** for a Non-Illuminated Advertisement - Permanent site entrance signage at the Two Village Bypass Construction, Tinker Brook, Stratford St Andrew, IP13 0BL. There was a further discussion of the application and it was confirmed by a vote of those present that there was one objection, one abstention and five in support (in that they did not have a valid objection under material planning matters). The Parish Clerk to respond to the consultation by the deadline accordingly.

12 Urgent items

(i) The Clerk was asked to write to the resident of a property to request that they

address the overgrown hedge which had made the footpath next to the house inaccessible; this meant that pedestrians needed to walk into the lay-by.

(ii) Cllr Williams referred to standing water at several locations in Botany Lane. Tractors had filled the gullies with mud when using the Lane for the sugar beet harvest. Cllr Williams had reported this via the online tool.

(iii) It was noted that mud on the road on the corner by St Andrew's Church had been reported as a hazard by Cllr Reid (SCC).

(iv) Issue with both noticeboards were noted. The Clerk would seek a quote for their repair. The Clerk was also asked to research the cost of replacement low-maintenance noticeboards.

13 Next meeting

The date in January 2026 and indicative items for the agenda were noted.

14 EXEMPT: Review of the Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer's performance and terms and conditions

The Parish Council reviewed the performance of the Clerk/RFO throughout 2025 and stated it was very satisfied with her work and that no areas for improvement had been identified. The Parish Council agreed that the Clerk/RFOs hourly rate be increased to SCP 32 on the current pay scales with immediate effect.

The Meeting closed at 8.40pm