

Fovant Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 07th May 2025 at 19:00hrs.

Venue: The Waterside, Fovant Youth Club, High Street, Fovant, Salisbury.
Present: Cllr. A. Phillips (Chair part of meeting), Cllr. D. Horne, Cllr. M. Wallis (Chair (part of the meeting) Cllr. H. Coxe, Cllr. J. Ellis, Cllr. P. Page.
Attendees: Mrs. J. Wallis (Clerk), Two members of the public from 19:35.

30:25: Apologies:

Cllr. A. Cousley, Cllr. N. Najjar.

31:25: Noting of absence:

None.

32:25: Declarations of Interest :

None declared.

33:25: Resignation of the council.

34:25: Election of the chair:

Current chairperson Cllr. A. Phillips stated his wish not to continue as chair but remain as councillor. Cllr. Phillips informed the meeting that Cllr. Cousley although absent from the meeting and unable to vote indicated his preference for Cllr. Wallis as chair and Cllr. Horne as vice chair, Cllr Wallis indicated he would be prepared to take over the role.

Cllr. Wallis thanked Cllr. Phillips for his time in the chairs position and looked forward to working with the council productively.

Outcome:

Unanimous decision to elect Cllr. Wallis as chair.

35:25: Election of the Vice Chair.

Following a short debate Cllr. Horne was nominated and agreed to continue his role as vice chair.

Signed by:

Chair

Date:

Outcome:

Unanimous decision to elect as vice chair.

36:25: Councillors to sign Acceptance of Office letters.

Clerk handed out and received back all councillors present, duly signed and witnessed acceptance letters.

Outcome:

Letters will added to record for the council by clerk. Cllr. Cousley to be approached separately.

37:25: Review of Portfolio holders.

Chair asked the meeting to consider current portfolio categories and suggest additional sections which may be applicable. Following some debate the following were agreed.

- Chair: Emergency planning and parish steward liaison.
- Cllr. Horne: Speed indicator devices, Liaison with police and liaison with visiting police.
- Cllr. Phillips: Road safety and liaison with LHFIG.
- Cllr. Cousley: Flood warden and emergency planning.
- Cllr. Coxe: Riparian rights and resident liaison.
- Cllr. Ellis: Road safety and liaison with the village hall committee.
- Cllr. Page: Children and young people's interests, footpaths, and bridleways.

Outcome:

Clerk to update website. Portfolio's to be added as an agenda item to future meetings.

38:25: Resolution of minutes of previous minutes for 6th March 2025 and 24th March 2025.**Outcome:**

Minutes agreed as accurate and will be added to the record by the Clerk.

Matters Arising:

09.07.24 (c) Tree survey – Chair informed the meeting this work continues.

Outcome: Deferred to next meeting.

09.11.24 (k) Update on Sutton Road land transfer – Clerk reports completed.

Outcome: Remove from matters arising.

27:25 (a) Progress on village green project – Chair and Cllr. Horne reported no Progress, they will request an update from Cllr. Najjar at the next Meeting.

Outcome: Chair to request and update from Wiltshire councillor Najjar.

27:25 (g) Planning rules – update from Chair and Cllr. Phillips, following the initial Contact they were unable to progress as the cabinet member in Wiltshire council was not re-elected.

Outcome: Chair to request a face-to-face meeting with Cllr. Najjar to follow this up.

27:25 (i) Highways engineer visit – Chair asked for the highways engineer to review Work completed outside the Waterside Youth club; this has not happened.

Outcome: Chair will chase.

27:25 (j) Brook Street repairs - Chair updated the council that following a letter to Open reach the chamber had been drained but Open reach was unable to connect the Chamber to the stream as the water was deemed as contaminated. Open reach were meeting with Wiltshire council on site to look at prospective outcomes to overcome the issues. The chair asked for the ducts to be sealed to give a permanent fix to the issues. Two members of the public present stated they did not believe this would solve the issues, there followed a discussion about where the water was coming from. The two residents stated that without an owner of the bridleway they accepted upkeep of the path was the resident's responsibility. They informed the council that they now have the funds to enable repair and that this was starting imminently, they did however ask the council for funds toward the bridlepaths upkeep in the future. Following debate around suitability of the council to fund Potential funding and where it could be sourced, the item was deferred to enable the council to source further information.

Outcome:

Defer to June meeting to enable discussion around a potential policy. Clerk to explore external avenues for potential content for a Fovant policy.

27:25 (l&n) Metro counts – Cllr. Phillips has requested further metro counts.

Outcome:

Defer to next meeting.

27:25 (p) Youth initiative – The clerk directed councillors to the clerk report sent to them and gave a brief update.

Outcome:

Update again at next meeting as an agenda item. Clerk to discuss further with Cllr. Page.

39:25: Review of Delegation arrangements for the council.

The clerk reported that the new financial regulations (2025) for the council included the delegation to the clerk so this policy could now be disregarded.

Outcome:

Clerk to remove financial delegation policy from the website.

40:25 Review of Standing orders, financial regulations, and Councillor code of Conduct.

The standing orders policy (2025), Financial Regulations policy (2025) and the Councillor code of conduct (2020) have already been circulated for agreement to members with no feedback. Cllr. Ellis requested some changes to be made to the financial regulations following the chairs appointment.

Outcome:

Minimal changes made to financial regulations (2025) at the meeting, changes unanimously agreed and the regulations accepted and adopted by council, Standing orders (2025) unanimously accepted and adopted by council, Code of Conduct for councillors (2020) unanimously accepted and adopted by council. Policies to placed on the website and accepted into core policy documents by the clerk.

41:25: Review of Asset Register 2025/2026.

Asset register discussed, assets on the register do not depreciate.

Outcome:

Current assets register unanimously accepted into the council record.

42:25: Review of Insurance cover for 2025/2026

The clerk informed council that the current cover expires in July 2025 and given the land transfer is complete to consider adding land liability insurance to the policy.

Outcome:

Council unanimously agreed to explore a quote for the insurance with With land liability insurance. Clerk to follow up with insurance company.

43:25: Review of Banking arrangements for 2025/2026.

Banking discussed.

Outcome:

Council unanimously agreed to continue with current banking arrangements.

44:25: Schedule of monthly direct debit payments 2025/2026

- Grist for waste removal from two bins.
- Starboard Systems for Accounting software.
- Grass cutting for playground and play park.
- Staff Salary.
- Lloyds bank charges.

Outcome:

Monthly direct debit schedule unanimously noted and accepted.

45:25: Schedule of annual Subscriptions.

- Microsoft subscription for three, clerk, chair, and vice chair.
- Wiltshire association of Local Councils. (WALC)
- Society of Local Council Clerks. (SLCC)
- Rental of storage at The Waterside.
- Insurance premium.
- Information Commissioners office (ICO)
- Payroll Administration.
- Website fees for WIX and Go Daddy.

Debate ensued around the Microsoft subscriptions, Cllr. Phillips stated he was happy to continue as a signatory approver for the Lloyds bank account if his Microsoft subscription was added to the schedule. The clerk informed council this would put a cost pressure on this budget line.

Outcome:

Schedule of annual subscriptions, with the inclusion of an additional Microsoft subscription for Cllr. Phillips unanimously agreed.

46:25: Schedule of Grants.

- a) Cemetery gardening club.
- b) Fovant Relief in need. (FRIN)
- c) Village Green.
- d) LHFIG.
- e) Road safety and footpaths.
- f) Youth Initiative.
- g) Emergency Hub

There was debate around spend and how to appropriately apportion spend with the clerk giving advice.

Outcome:

It was unanimously agreed that Council would:

Fund gardening tools for the cemetery gardening club and then donate them to the club. Cllr. Phillips would send Council an invoice from FRIN to fund promotion of FRIN's fund raising.

Village Green monies would be held in abeyance awaiting outcomes of the land swap.

The clerk informed the council that the LHFIG monies were in a separate reserve alongside CIL monies which would pay for the buildout road safety works expected to be commenced in 2025.

Road safety monies will be discussed at a later meeting.

Youth Initiative monies already had ear marked spend against it.

Emergency hub funds were held to buy provisions in the event of an emergency.

47:25: Financial Matters for consideration/Noting.**a) Receipt of the annual internal audit.**

The internal audit and its contents discussed with general agreement around the improvements in council processes this year.

Outcome:

Council unanimously voted to apply for a bronze council award to mark the council's improvement in the last year. Clerk to present the report on the noticeboard, website and send it through to the external auditor as per auditing requirements.

b) Presentation of the Annual Governance Statement (AGAR) S.1

AGAR discussed with a review as to why assertion four was not achieved. This is not expected to be repeated moving forward in 2025/2026.

Outcome:

AGAR was Signed Chair and clerk, unanimously accepted into the council documents. Clerk to present the AGAR on the noticeboard, website and send it through to the external auditor as per auditing requirements.

c) Presentation of the Accounting Statement S.2

Council discussed the accounting statement.

Outcome:

The accounting statement was Signed Chair and clerk, unanimously accepted into the council documents. Clerk to present the accounting statement on the notice board, website and send it through to the external auditor as per auditing requirements.

e) Setting of commencement date for the exercise of public rights.

Clerk has completed the form, and the exercise will commence on the 3rd of June 2025.

Outcome:

Clerk will present the exercise of public rights documents on the notice board and the website with an accompanying copy to the external auditor as per auditing requirements.

f) Income and expenditure reports for approval

1. March 2025 reconciliation of the bank.
2. April 2025 reconciliation of the bank.
3. Clerks finance report of income and expenditure April 2025.

Outcome:

Cllr Ellis elected to undertake approval of bank reconciliation for 2025, March and April 2025 approved as per protocol.

Clerks finance report approved for agreed payments plus an additional spend for stationary for £87.71.

Clerk reported a VAT claim for 2024/2025; VAT reclaims will now take place quarterly moving forward.

48:25: Items for next meeting.

Cllr. Ellis asked for Website and emails to be included.

Cllr. Horne asked for solar panel for SID's to be included.

Clerk informed the meeting that three to four new policies would be being circulated for comments in the month so would require approval.

49:25 Time, Date, and place of years meetings for 2025/2024

There was debate about frequency of meetings moving forward as the last two meetings had over run. Council will consider frequency of meetings at the next meeting in June and explore future over run at that meeting.

Outcome:

Next meeting on Monday 9th June 19:00hrs – 21:00hrs.

Meeting concluded at 21:15hrs.