

FARNHAM WITH STRATFORD ST ANDREW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 14 April 2025 at the Riverside Centre

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

In attendance: Katherine Abbott (Parish Clerk).

1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest related to the agenda.

3 Reports from the District and County Councillors

A written report had been received from Councillor Sally Noble (ESC) and this was noted.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 March 2025

The unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting were approved without amendment.

5 Matters arising

Overgrown ivy

The Council had received two quotes for the clearing of the ivy on the wire fence between the allotments and the Riverside Centre. However, it was decided that Councillors would prune and tidy the ivy and Councillor Williams undertook to co-ordinate this.

30 mph sign

Councillor Williams reported that the damaged sign had been reported to SCC via the online tool and quickly replaced.

6 Questions from the public

No questions or issues of concern had been raised by members of the public.

7 Approval of an Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy

The Clerk reported that, in accordance with the National Association of Local Council's recommended list of policies for smaller authorities, she was preparing new or updated

Signed(Chair)

Date.....

policies for the Council to review, approve and adopt. The first policies to be prepared would be those designated as Essential by NALC.

The Policy was unanimously approved and adopted.

8 Disciplinary Policy

This was the second policy prepared for review, approval and adoption (see 7 above).

The Policy was unanimously approved and adopted.

9 Update on the thermal imaging surveys

It was reported by Councillors Pass and Warne that a total of five surveys had been requested and undertaken. Unfortunately, some issues with the camera had been experienced.

10 Update from external meetings

Sizewell C Southern Transport Forum held on 12 March 2025

Councillor Norman had attended this meeting and provided a short summary of the main points. The minutes of this Forum were now available on the SZC website.

Benhall and Sternfield PCs briefing with Sizewell C regarding the new roundabout at Friday Street

Councillor Ayres had attended this briefing and reported on the discussion on the extensive destruction of vegetation and trees in the location of the new roundabout.

11 End of the Financial Year 2024/5 Income and Expenditure report

The Responsible Finance Officer presented the end of the financial year report to the Council. This was reviewed and noted.

12 Report of the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

The claimed refund of VAT paid during the 2024/5 financial year had been received and totalled £138.80.

The current balance was £1405.09 (including CIL). The Precept was expected shortly and after that arrived the restricted CIL funds would be held separate to the main unrestricted account.

The following were submitted for approval.

Clerk/RFO salary	£336.34	s112, LGA 1972
HMRC	£84.08	s112, LGA 1972
SALC Annual M'ship	£160.28	s111, LGA 1972

Signed

Date.....

(Chair)

Clerk's expenses (Paper) £4.50 s112. LGA 1972

All payments were authorised. The new balance, after payment, was £820.09 (including CIL funds).

13 Report of the Clerk

A log of correspondence received in the last month had been circulated to Councillors.

14 Proposals for a unitary authority (Devolution)

The Council noted recent updates provided by SCC and SALC. There was a discussion of the possible ramifications of the proposal for the Parish Council directly, and in terms of the level of support it would receive in the event of the formation of a unitary authority. Further discussion would be scheduled as and when necessary, during the process.

15 Urgent items

With reference to items 7 and 8 on the agenda, Councillor Sayer asked the Clerk for more details on the policies it was proposed be adopted, when these would be done, and asked that priority be given to a communications policy. The Clerk repeated that she was working to NALCs recommendation for essential policies for smaller authorities and that these would be prepared piecemeal, when other tasks, such as preparation for the internal audit, allowed. Councillor Sayer reiterated his view that a communications policy was needed as a priority and pressed the Clerk for a date for this to be prepared. The Clerk reminded Councillor Sayer of the decision made in July 2024, when he had previously raised this issue, for him to establish a sub-committee and bring recommendations to the Parish Council, however, this had not been possible because of other demands on Councillor Sayer's time. The Clerk said she would prepare a communications policy at the earliest opportunity, her workload permitting, but she was unable to commit to a definite date at this time.

16 Next meeting

The two Annual Meetings would be held on Monday 12 May 2025 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 20.35 hrs

Signed(Chair)

Date.....