

FAWKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Fawkham Parish Council** meeting held at **Fawkham Village Hall, Valley Road, Fawkham DA3 8NA** on **Thursday 4th September 2025** at **19:30** to transact the following business.

Grace Champion
Clerk to Fawkham Parish Council

Members of the Parish Council:

Cllr Laura Evans (Chair), Cllr James Cherry (Vice Chair), Cllr Duncan Harker,
Cllr Karen Wilkes & Cllr Carol Peach

1. **Parish Councillor Vacancy**

Proposal: New Councillor to sign Declaration of Acceptance following interview process.

Resolved: Cllr Carol Peach was formally co-opted and signed her Declaration of Acceptance. The Chair welcomed Cllr Peach to Fawkham Parish Council.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Noted: Cllr J Cherry (illness).

3. **Declarations of Interest for items relating to the Agenda:**

Councillors to make any declarations that may be required by virtue of the Parish Council's adopted Code of Conduct.

Noted: Cllr L Evans declared an interest in a planning enforcement case due to it being a neighbouring property.

4. **Public Session**

Parish Council meetings are open to the public. In accordance with the Standing Orders, thirty minutes are allocated for members of the public to raise any matters and partake in discussions. There are no further opportunities for members of the public to speak during the Parish Council meeting. The Council may enter closed session at the end of the meeting to discuss a confidential item, members of the public still present will be asked to leave.

Noted: 5 MOPs in attendance, including Dst Cllr S Malone and Dst Cllr L Harrison.

5. **Planning Applications:** to agree the Parish Council's responses to the following planning applications:

(1) **25/01717/LDCEX** - The Cottage North Lodge Manor Lane Fawkham Kent DA3 8NB. *The change of use to a single dwelling house.* **Consultation deadline: 10 September 2025.**

Noted: the Chair provided a brief summary of the application. All were in agreement to having no issues with this application and were happy for FPC to support it.

(2) **SE/25/02148** – Orchard Farm, Fawkham Road, Fawkham, Kent DA3 7BJ. Details pursuant to condition 9 (hard and soft landscape proposals) of 24/02120/MMA. **Consultation deadline: 21 August 2025.**

Responded via Delegated Authority to the Clerk on 15 August 2025.

(3) **SE/25/02149** – Orchard Farm, Fawkham Road, Fawkham, Kent DA3 7BJ. Details pursuant to condition 10 (external lighting strategy) of 24/02120/MMA. **Consultation deadline: 21 August 2025.**

Responded via Delegated Authority to the Clerk on 15 August 2025.

(4) **SE/25/02150** – Orchard Farm, Fawkham Road, Fawkham, Kent DA3 7BJ. Details pursuant to condition 14 (mechanical ventilation) of 24/02120/MMA. **Consultation deadline: 21 August 2025. No response submitted.**

Noted: The Chair also notified the Councillors of a further appeal of Cross House. It was agreed that the Cllrs would review what had been submitted previously to check if any additions to this needed to be made. The PC would respond via Delegated Authority to the Clerk if required.

6. **Planning Decisions:**

To note planning decisions received from Sevenoaks District Council:

- (1) 25/01245/LDCEX - Beeches Farm Kennels Canada Farm Road South Darenth Kent DA4 9LA. *Lawful Development Certificate to confirm the mixed commercial use for dog kennelling, commercial horse livery and horse grazing.* **GRANTED**
- (2) 25/01972/DETAIL – Former Depot North of Salts Farm, Fawkham Road, Fawkham. Details pursuant to condition 11 (Surface water drainage system verification report) of 22/01550/MMA. **GRANTED**
- (3) 25/01548/HOUSE - West Rays Valley Road Fawkham. *Front and rear extensions, alterations to fenestration, removal of chimney.* **REFUSED**

Decisions noted.

7. Approve Minutes:

Proposal: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 17th July 2025, as attached.

Resolved: It was proposed through the Chair that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chair, seconded by Cllr D Harker.

8. Matters Arising: matters arising relating to the Minutes, not on this agenda.

Noted: Speedgate Hill Mirror. Cllr J Cherry and Cllr K Wilkes had checked the proposed site for placement and it was agreed that it would not work. Liability issues were also noted. It has been communicated to the owner of the land and residents that this option was not possible. Clerk has also now posted a letter to White House Lodge in relation to the maintenance of the hedge running along Valley Rd.

Noted: Brands Hatch Lights: all were in agreement to contact CPRE Kent to see if this item was something they could support.

Noted: Old Halt Close rocks and planting: Clerk noted she had chased but no response.

Noted: PROW: Cllr K Wilkes confirmed she would walk the last two paths in the next couple of weeks.

9. Finance Approval: (a) Expenditure and Income - details to be tabled. Approval of cheques and payments, including (b) online banking access update for Cllr Cherry.

Date	Payee/For	Budget taken from	Amount
01/08/25	Epson Ink Subscription PAID VIA DEBIT CARD	stationery	£4.49
04/08/25	Lebara Phone Contract PAID VIA DEBIT CARD	phone	£5.00
20/08/25	Clerk Salary AUGUST - G. CHAMPION.	salary/TAX/NI	£436.87
20/08/25	Clerk HMRC Tax & NI payment	salary/TAX/NI	£109.00
26/08/25	Festive Lights - replacement Christmas tree lights PAID VIA DEBIT CARD	Repairs & Maintenance	£50.97
01/09/25	Epson Ink Subscription PAID VIA DEBIT CARD	stationery	£4.49
02/09/25	Lebara Phone Contract PAID VIA DEBIT CARD	phone	£5.00
05/09/25	Clerk Salary SEPTEMBER - G. CHAMPION.	salary/TAX/NI	£433.17
05/09/25	Clerk HMRC Tax & NI payment	salary/TAX/NI	£112.70
05/09/25	RH Gardening Services Invoice 064	grounds maintenance (inc Small Grains)	£725.00
05/09/25	Parish Online	Parish OS map licence	£50.40
	Total		£1937.09

Resolved: (a) It was agreed to approve the payments listed in the schedule above. Signed by the Chair (as no other Councillor available to approve the payments) and Cllr K Wilkes. (b) no update.

10. **Solar farms update: Chimmens, Horton Wood, New Ash Green and Dean Bottom**
Proposal: to sign the Heads of Terms for a Community Fund Agreement relating to Chimmens solar farm.
Chimmens: Resolved: all in agreement and Clerk signed Heads of Terms. The Chair noted that the application had been granted in July with grid connection offer of October 2030, although the applicants is hoping for October 2028, which would be the earliest date when the community funding would be received.
Horton Wood: the Chair noted that construction was due to start this month and that the community funding would not start until connection had been made to the national grid, likely Q3 2026.
Farningham: it was noted that this site was significantly smaller in size and planning permission had been granted.
NAG solar: the Chair noted that an email had been received from the leader of the residents' objection group thanking FPC for their response. It had been agreed at the last meeting that FPC would not currently support or object to the application until information on the application is clarified. In relation to the switching station issue raised, FPC is of the understanding that this is not a junction which would allow connection for further solar farms but in effect an on/off switch to ensure no overloading of the network.
Dean Bottom: no further information at this stage.
11. **Remembrance Sunday:**
proposal: to agree date for this service and arrangements to contact St. Mary's; and
resolved: Agreement for this to be held on Sunday 9th November at 10:45, with the minute silence at 11:00.
proposal: agreement of the purchase of a wreath and donation.
resolved: all in agreement – clerk to order wreath and process donation payment.
12. **KCC assets within Fawkham:** update.
Noted: the Clerk confirmed that she had requested a list of KCC Fawkham assets from the KCC Member but had not heard back on this point as of yet.
13. **Local Plan update:** Regulation 18 consultation.
Noted: The Chair ran through the local plan timeline. The Reg 18 consultation will begin at the end of October and will be open for a minimum of 6 weeks. The Chair has made contact with the planning consultant who confirmed his availability to assist with FPC's response, and with Hartley PC to see if a similar arrangement of sharing costs would be possible again. There is a budget for this set aside.
14. **Water leaks:** discussion of issues and agreement of next steps.
Noted: the Chair noted a 10th attempted leak fix of the leak by Fawkham Green Garage. It was agreed that this issue will be raised with Laura Trott MP and SE Water could also be contacted directly. It was also agreed that better road signage relating to road closures and where this is in place needs to be covered.
15. **Small Grains:** update on progress and Business Case submission.
Noted: The Chair provided an update, namely:

SDC officers have now recommended to Cabinet that the first preference is to dispose of Small Grains to FPC, through the Disposal Process. This would be at an open market value. The second preference is to dispose to WK Housing Association, and then to dispose at auction. This was also the recommendation of FIAC, with a strong preference for the first option. The decision will be made by Cabinet at their meeting next week (along with 10 other sites). However, see below.

The open market value, and basis of that valuation, through the Disposal Process is unknown to FPC at the moment, but likely to be too high.

FPC submitted an Expression of Interest in a Community Asset Transfer (CAT). Such CATs can be for below market value if there are clear social, economic or environmental reasons for making the transfer. Although our EOI was declined by officers, the process has been changed so that we can submit a business case for a CAT at below market value. FPC prepared what is

hoped is a strong business case and submitted that towards the end of August. The decision on the business case will be made by Cabinet, following consideration and a recommendation by FIAC. If a decision is made in favour of a CAT, then the decision made at September's meeting under the Disposal Process will be superseded.

FPC are trying to clarify the timeline and how a cost would be determined for the CAT. It is not yet known if the CAT will be considered by FIAC and then Cabinet at their November or January meetings.

FPC has commissioned a professional valuation of Small Grains as a designated open space, as required for the CAT business case. A site visit was carried out in August and we are awaiting the valuation report. That will then be sent on to SDC.

District Cllr Sean Malone continues to work hard on this, alongside our Chair.

16. **Asset Register:** update on maintenance issues.
Noted: the Clerk noted that the new lights had arrived for the Christmas tree. She would chase the contact again to try and get them fitted.
Noted: Parish Signs: the Chair will email soon for an update on when they will arrive.
Noted: FVH car park fence: Cllr D Harker to remove old fence in due course.
Noted: school path: no issues this month, Cllr D Harker checked.
17. **Highways Improvement Plan:** update on HIP.
Noted: the Chair formally noted the successful CIL bid for the school footway. The work is now out for tender and KCC will advise progress in due course.
Noted: flashing school signs. KCC Engineer now hoping these can be fixed/replace at the same time as the school footway.
Noted: Castle Hill. KCC have confirmed there is no funding for this until the school footway cost is known. Awaiting further reply.
18. **AGAR:** update from the Clerk following review of the External Auditor's Report, and next steps.
Noted: the Clerk noted that Mazars had responded with a number of queries which she has responded to and awaits a further response.
19. **Woodland Trust interpretation boards:** update on arrival and proposal: review and acceptance of quote from WJ Property Services of £288.00 (excluding VAT).
Noted: all in agreement to approve this quote. The Chair confirmed that the designs had been sent off at the beginning of August and the signs would be dispatched tomorrow and are due to arrive next week. Woodland Trust's ranger would be advised on when the signs are to be installed.
20. **SDC Street Naming:** discussion and decision on new road name preferences to be submitted to SDC for Orchard Farm development. **Deadline: 12 September 2025.**
Noted: A brief discussion was had over potential options to put forward. It was agreed that the two options FPC would recommend are (in order of preference) 1. Upper Tare (the field name on the tithe map) and 2. Banjo Close or Banjo View (as the site is close to a prehistoric banjo field enclosure).
21. **Chair and Councillors reports:** to note any items not listed on the agenda.
Noted: it was noted that the wildflowers at Baldwins Green had been cut by someone unknown at the end of July with the cuttings taken away. The seed mix would have flowered until the end of October and was due to be cut then, after setting seed. As a result of the premature cutting, more seeds are likely to be need to be sown in the spring, following the installation of the new Parish sign.
Noted: an email had been received on the local government reorganisation, listing the potential models for the new unitary authority as assessed by KPMG. Clerk to circulate to all.
22. **Open Forum for Councillors to raise matters to be placed on the next agenda:**
Members are asked to consider agenda items for the next meeting. The details of the agenda item will be sent to the Clerk by the Thursday (one week) before the published meeting. Late details cannot guarantee inclusion on the proposed agenda.
Noted: Cllr D Harker raised the parking issues of parents/staff of Fawkham Primary School that had

been posted on Facebook. It was agreed that the Clerk would email the headteacher to cover the issues including the hall spaces being used.

23. Date of Next Meeting:

To note the next meeting which is scheduled for **9th October 2025** at Fawkham Village Hall, time 19:30.

24. Confidential Item - Planning/Planning Enforcement: Proposal: to review, update and agree actions for cases.

Resolved: The Council resolved to hear the item in a confidential session due to the nature of the content. Cases were discussed and actions agreed.

Meeting closed: 21:32.