

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE 28TH MAY 2026

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** (here in F&GP) held on **THURSDAY 5 MARCH 2026** at the Parish Council Office, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 19.45 hours.

Present:

Committee Members:	Mr. W. Blunden	Mr. D. Lowman
	Mrs. A. Beecroft (Committee Chair)	Mrs. V Upton
	Mrs. L. Grace (Vice-Chair)	Mr. T. Webster

In attendance: Mr A. Funnell (Parish Clerk)

* Denotes absence.

The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed those present and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall.

379. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

379.1 All members were present.

380. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA.

380.1 The following declaration of interest was **NOTED**:

Item 16. Community Events, 3. Lindfield Village Day. Cllr Blunden declared a personal interest in this item in view of his membership with the King Edward Hall management committee and Lindfield Village Day committee.

381. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

381.1 There were no members of the public present.

382. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE F&GP COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2026.

382.1 The Chair called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the F&GP Committee held on Thursday 8 January 2026. These were **AGREED** and the Chair **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

383. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

383.1 The Chair made no announcements.

384. WORK SCHEDULE AND ACTION LIST.

384.1 The Chair referred to the Action List and updated Committee Work Schedule, which had been circulated with the agenda, and this was **NOTED**.

385. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

385.1 Grants budget. It was **NOTED** that the budget of £2,500 had been fully spent, with a small surplus of £3.00 having to be met from general reserves.

385.2 To Consider Grant Requests. Cllr Blunden reported on behalf of the Grants Panel and advised that no grant requests had been received.

385.3 To Note Letters of Thanks Received.

It was **NOTED** that a letter of thanks had been received from St James & St Peters Hospice.

386. BUDGET 2025/26: TO NOTE THE LATEST BUDGET PROGRESS REPORTS.

386.1 Members had been presented with copies of the RFO summary and detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading reports and Expenditure from Earmarked Reserves reports to 30 November 2025, 31 December 2025 and 31 January 2026 which had been circulated with the agenda.

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Budget progress was **NOTED**:

i) F&GP Committee:

The following expenditure had been spent from a total budget of £199,791:

November 2025:	£128,181
December 2025:	£141,728
January 2026:	£157,567

ii) Overall Council Budget:

Expenditure had been spent from the following budgets:

November 2025:

A total of £160,526 had been spent from the budget of £277,696 of which £28,774 had been spent from the Environment & Amenities (E&A) Committee budget of £74,505. £1,233 had been spent from the Allotments budget of £3,000. £172 had been spent from the Planning & Traffic Committee budget of £400. £9,672.48 had been spent to date from Earmarked Reserves as follows:

• Wilderness Field S106 Maintenance	£800
• Council Elections	£150
• F&GP Plan 23-27	£8,772.48

December 2025

A total of £ 182,659 had been spent from the budget of £277,696 of which £37,334 had been spent from the Environment & Amenities (E&A) Committee budget of £74,505. £1,239 had been spent from the Allotments budget of £3,000. £192 had been spent from the Planning & Traffic Committee budget of £400. £9,672.48 had been spent from Earmarked Reserves as reported for December 2025.

January 2026:

A total of £200,470 had been spent from the budget of £277,696 of which £39,300 had been spent from the Environment & Amenities (E&A) Committee budget of £74,505. £1,246 had been spent from the Allotments budget of £3,000. £192 had been spent from the Planning & Traffic Committee budget of £400. £9,672.48 had been spent from Earmarked Reserves as reported for December 2025. follows:

iii) General Reserves Expenditure:

£2,165 had been spent from general reserves up to 31 January 2026.

iv) Income:

The following total income had been received:

	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026
Precept	290,668	290,668	290,668
Bank and Building Society Interest	2,522	3,210	3,318
Grants & Donations	357	357	357
CTH Rental	6,464	7,272	8,080
CTH Service Charge	344	344	344
License Fee	152	152	152
Christmas Festival Night	1,430	1,430	1,430
Allotments	<u>1,260</u>	<u>1,260</u>	<u>1,293</u>
	£303,197	£304,693	£305,642

387. FINANCIAL MONITORING: TO NOTE THE ACCOUNT RECORDS.

387.1 Members had been presented with account records to 30 November 2025, 31 December 2025 and 31 January 2026, which had been circulated with the agenda.

i) Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation and To Note Deposits and Investments Held.

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It was **NOTED** that the cashbook total bank cash and investment reconciliation to 30 November 2025 was £342,646.52, to 31 December 2025 was £320,327.60 and to 31 January 2026 was £303,136.70.

ii) Payment Analysis.

It was **NOTED** that the following total payments net of VAT had been approved:

November 2025:

- £27,829.55 Unity Trust Bank current account.
- £791.58 Lloyds Bank Charge Card.
- £18.41 Barclays Bank current account.

December 2025:

- £22,505.27 Unity Trust Bank current account.
- £331.44 Lloyds Bank Charge Card.
- £33.22 Barclays Bank current account.

January 2026:

- £18,081.60 Unity Trust Bank current account.
- £284.86 Lloyds Bank Charge Card.
- £18.05 Barclays Bank current account.

iii) To Approve/Ratify any required Payments (If required).

There were no payments to approve or ratify.

388. BANK ARRANGEMENTS: TO CONSIDER THE REPORT AND MATTERS REQUIRING A DECISION.

388.1 The Chair referred to a report that had been prepared by the RFO and circulated with the agenda. All regular payments had now been transferred from the Barclays Bank debit card to the Unity Trust Bank charge card. As such there was no merit in continuing with the Barclays Bank Business current account. Members were reminded that the Barclays Bank Business Premium savings account could be maintained as a stand-alone product with online banking. A recommendation had been made to cancel the debit card and to close the Barclays Bank Business current account.

The report was **NOTED**, and it was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council to approve the following:

- a) To withdraw and cancel the use of Barclays Bank Debit Card, held in the name of the Clerk.
- b) To transfer the balance of funds held in the Barclays Bank Business current account to the Unity Trust Bank current account to assist with everyday banking arrangements.
- c) To close the Barclays Bank Business current account.
- d) To agree to continue operating the Barclays Business Premium Savings account with online banking.

389. TOILETS ON THE COMMON PROJECT: TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS.

389.1 The Chair had invited Cllr Webster to provide an update. Progress was ongoing to try to seek a reduction in costs and members were reminded that some permissions had expired. The working group had visited Gigloo Limited to look at possible alternative solutions.

The above was **NOTED**.

390. PLAN 23-27: TO CONSIDER THE REPORT AND ANY MATTERS REQUIRING A DECISION.

390.1 Members **NOTED** the updated version of the Plan 23-27 tracker.

391. CLERK AND RFO REPORT.

391.1 The Chair referred to a report that had been prepared by the Clerk dated 5 March 2026 and circulated with the agenda. Members **NOTED** updates relating to the following items:

- a) Clerk.
 - i) A redundant air conditioning unit in the archive room had been removed.

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- ii) The fire extinguisher service had been carried out in February. Two extinguishers were replaced after having reached the end of their service life.
- iii) The Clerk and Deputy Clerk were due to meet with the new website designer on 9 March 2026. The existing domain name had been transferred to the new supplier.
- iv) The solar panels had generated 585kWh as of 5 January 2026. An export tariff had been successfully applied for.
- v) It was AGREED to approve a request from the Deputy Parish Clerk for SLCC membership.

b) RFO Report.

- i) Cllr Lowman has carried out an internal control check of accounts for the invoice periods July to September 2025 and October to December 2025. There were no matters arising. Copies of the reports are attached for your information. The RFO wishes to convey her thanks to Cllr Lowman for his assistance in this matter.
- ii) A claim for VAT refund totalling £6,098.23 was submitted to HMRC 3 February 2026. This related to the invoice period October to December 2025.
- iii) A summary of thresholds and current savings account interest rates had been provided.

392. GOVERNANCE: TO CONSIDER THE INTERNAL AUDIT AND ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OVERALL INTERNAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEM 2025/26.

- 392.1 Members had been presented with copies of the annual review of the effectiveness of the overall internal audit and the internal control system, which had been prepared by Councillor Grace and signed on 25 February 2025.

The reports were **NOTED**.

393. COMMUNITY AWARDS: TO CONSIDER THE REPORT.

- 393.1 The Chair referred to a report that had been prepared by the Deputy Clerk and circulated with the agenda. As part of the Parish Meeting/Village Road Show 2026, the Council would like to introduce a Community Award. Due to third party time constraints, a decision was required as to whether members wished to proceed with the award scheme. An article on the scheme had already been drafted for Lindfield Life. It had been proposed to launch the scheme next week.

Members had been asked to approve the proposed plan for the Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Awards, including an expenditure budget and the recommendation to approve the Lindfield Parish Council Awards Policy.

The report was **NOTED**, and it was **AGREED** to approve the following:

- a) That the Annual Parish meeting would be held on 20 May 2026 in King Edward Hall.
- b) To approve the plan for the Parish Awards and the Annual Parish meeting as presented with the report.
- c) A budget of £300 to cover the cost of the Awards and refreshments.

In addition, it was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council to approve the Lindfield Parish Council Awards Policy, that was attached to the report as presented.

394. WORKING GROUP REPORTS: TO CONSIDER THE MEMBER UPDATES AND THE DRAFT COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY.

- 394.1 The Chair referred to a draft document that had been submitted by the Communications and Community Engagement Working Group and circulated with the agenda. Cllr Lowman provided members with a summary of the Communications and Engagement Strategy and its aims.

The Communications and Engagement Strategy was **NOTED**, and it was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council for approval and implementation.

395. ASSET MANAGEMENT: TO CONSIDER THE REPORT.

395.1 Telephone Kiosk.

The Chair reported that the Clerk had purchased a lead paint testing kit. The Council Chair, Council Vice Chair and Clerk were due to meet with the Lindfield Society, who had expressed an interest in contributing towards this project.

395.2 Rolling Asset Replacement Reserve: Bus Shelter.

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The Chair reported that WSCC Highways were intending to relocate a bus stop, which was located at the entrance to The Wekin. To assist with this, it would be necessary to relocate the Council owned bus shelter. This work was scheduled to take place in May/June 2026. This matter would be considered as an item of the agenda at the next Full Council meeting that was due to take place on 12 March 2026, when members would be given the opportunity to discuss the option of replacing the current shelter with that of a new model. The cost for replacement would be in the region of £3k - £15k, subject to the design agreed to.

The above was **NOTED**.

396. POLICY DOCUMENTS: TO CONSIDER UPDATED AND OR NEW POLICIES.

396.1 The Chair referred to a report that had been prepared by the Clerk and circulated with the agenda. Members had been asked to consider updates to the following documentation:

- a) Financial Regulations - the changes listed had taken onto consideration recommendations that had been suggested by the Council's internal auditor.
- b) Data Retention and Disposal Policy - this was a draft replacement document based on a template that had been used by other local authorities since 2024 and had included reference to Data Protection and Freedom of Information requests. The proposed document was a live document, enabling updates to be considered and approved as and when required.

Members **NOTED** the report, and **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full council to approve the following:

- a) To adopt the changes to the Financial Regulations as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report.
- b) To implement the proposed replacement Data Retention and Disposal Policy as outlined in Appendix 2. of the report.

397. RISK MANAGEMENT: TO CONSIDER ANY RISK ASSESSMENTS.

397.1 20 mph Consultation Stall.

Members had been presented with a retrospective draft risk assessment to review and approve. A near-miss report and future learning had been added to the document.

The above was **NOTED**, and it had been **AGREED** to accept the risk assessment.

397.2 Lindfield Village Day Stall.

Members had been requested to complete and return a draft risk assessment provided by the King Edward Hall village day organisers in respect of the stall that had been agreed to on Lindfield Village Day 30 May 2026.

The above was **NOTED**, and it had been **AGREED** to accept the risk assessment.

398. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS, AND TO RECEIVE ANY ATTENDANCE REPORTS.

398.1 Members had been presented with a Summary of Training and Meeting Attendance 2026, which had included future training sessions that had been booked.

The above was **NOTED**.

399. MATTERS ARISING AFTER THE PREPARATION OF THIS AGENDA, WHICH THE CHAIR AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT. SUCH MATTERS WILL BE FOR NOTING OR DEFERRAL TO A FUTURE MEETING ONLY.

399.1 There were no matters arising.

The public part of the meeting ended at **20.45 hours**.

400. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS]: TO CONSIDER WHETHER A RESOLUTION SHOULD BE MOVED UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 3(D) AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PUBLIC BODIES ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT 1960 SECTION 1(2), TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE FOLLOWING PART OF THE MEETING, BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED OR FOR OTHER SPECIAL REASONS (STAFFING).

