

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### **DRAFT SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE 2<sup>nd</sup> JULY 2026**

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** (herein F&GP) held on **THURSDAY 28 MAY 2026** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield (Jubilee Room).

The meeting began at 19.45 hours.

#### **Present:**

Committee Members:	Mr. W. Blunden	Mr. D. Lowman
	Mrs. A. Beecroft	Mrs. V Upton
	Mrs. L. Grace *	Mr. T. Webster *

**In attendance:** Mr A. Funnell (Parish Clerk)  
Mrs T. Ely (RFO)

\* Denotes absence.

This was the first meeting of the committee, following the annual meeting of the Council. The Vice Chair of the Council, Cllr Beecroft, opened the meeting and presided over the first item. She welcomed those present and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall.

#### **402. TO ELECT A CHAIR.**

402.1 The Vice Chair of the Council called for nominations for the office of Chair of the F&GP Committee for the Council year 2026/27.

It was **NOTED** that Cllr Beecroft had been nominated and was willing to stand. Cllr Beecroft was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Blunden and **SECONDED** by Cllr Upton. There being no further nominations, Cllr Amy Beecroft was duly **ELECTED** as Chair of the F&GP Committee for the Council year 2026/27. Cllr Beecroft took the Chair for the meeting.

#### **403. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIR.**

403.1 The Chair called for nominations for the office of Vice Chair of the F&GP Committee for the Council year 2026/27.

It was **NOTED** that Cllr Grace had been nominated and was willing to stand. Cllr Grace was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Beecroft and **SECONDED** by Cllr Lowman. There being no further nominations, Cllr Linda Grace was duly **ELECTED** as Vice Chair of the F&GP Committee for the Council year 2026/27.

#### **404. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.**

404.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Grace and Webster, and their reasons were accepted.

#### **405. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA.**

405.1 There were no declarations of interest from members regarding any items on the agenda.

#### **406. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

406.1 There were no members of the public present.

#### **407. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE F&GP COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 MARCH 2026.**

407.1 The Chair called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the F&GP Committee held on Thursday 5 March 2026. These were **AGREED** and the Chair **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

#### **408. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

408.1 The Chair wished to convey her gratitude to the councillors and all four members of staff who attended the Parish meeting. It was a good networking event, and a review would be undertaken to assist in planning next year's event.

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

It was in addition **NOTED** that a letter of thanks had been received from the Deputy Lord Lieutenant John Barclay for his kind invitation to attend the Parish meeting.

- 408.2 Members were reminded that Lindfield Parish Council would be managing a stall on Lindfield Village Day, 31 May 2026. As much support as possible would be gratefully appreciated.

**409. TO CONFIRM WORKING GROUPS AND MEMBERSHIP.**

- 409.1 The Chair referred members to a report that had been prepared by the Clerk and circulated with the agenda. This provided a summary of the previous year's working groups together with their terms of reference and remit.

It was **AGREED** to appoint the existing working groups of the F&GP Committee, terms of reference and remit as presented. Membership would be as follows:

<b>Working Group Membership 2026-27</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>WB</b>	<b>LG</b>	<b>DL</b>	<b>VU</b>	<b>TW</b>	<b>CW</b>
Administration & HR.	X	X			X		X
Grants Panel.		X	X		X		
Toilets on the Common.	X	X		X	X	X	
Clock Tower House Lease & Enterprise Park.		X			X		
Policies.	X		X			X	
Plan 23-27.	X	X	X	X	X	X	

It was further **AGREED** that, given their absence, Cllrs Grace and Webster would be approached to seek their agreement towards membership of the above working groups.

**410. WORK SCHEDULE AND ACTION LIST.**

- 410.1 The Chair referred to the Committee Work Schedule, which had been circulated with the agenda, and this was **NOTED**.

**411. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.**

- 411.1 Grants budget. It was **NOTED** that funds of £2,500 were available to spend from a budget of £2,500.

- 411.2 To Consider Grant Requests. Members had been presented with a summary of Grants and Donations for the new financial year, with details in respect of one application that had requested funding. Cllr Blunden reported on behalf of the Grants Panel and confirmed that consideration had been given towards the following grant request:

Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex.

An application requesting funding towards the operating costs of providing HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) in our community had been received, which had included the use of helicopters, rapid-response vehicles, medical equipment, fuel and highly trained crews. The total cost of their project was £20.8 million annually and a grant for £400 had been requested. The working group had recommended that a grant of £500 be awarded.

**RESOLVED:** in accordance with the recommendation of the Grants Panel and the Council's powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the following expenditure should be incurred which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure: a grant of £500 be made towards the work of Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex.

- 411.3 To Note Letters of Thanks Received.

No letters of thanks had been received.

**412. BUDGET 2026/27: TO NOTE THE LATEST BUDGET PROGRESS REPORTS.**

- 412.1 It was **NOTED** that progress reports for 2026/27 were currently in the process of being prepared by the RFO. Priority had to be given towards the preparation of annual accounts for the year-end 31 March 2026 and the submission of the AGAR to the external auditor.

- 412.2 The Chair advised members on budget progress for the financial year ending 31 March 2026, referring to the RFO financial report that had been circulated to members by email on 14 May 2026. The following was **NOTED**:

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### i) F&GP Committee:

A total of £210,194 had been spent, exceeding the budget of £199,791.

### ii) Overall Council Budget:

A total of £273,092 had been spent from the budget of £277,696, of which £57,317 had been spent from the Environment & Amenities (E&A) Committee budget of £74,505. £2,403 had been spent from the Allotments budget of £3,000. £282 had been spent from the Planning & Traffic Committee budget of £400.

### iii) General Reserves Expenditure.

A total non-budgeted expenditure of £2,896 had been met from general reserves.

### iv) Income:

Income totalling £309,474 had been received, of which £1,450 was represented by allotment rental.

## 413. FINANCIAL MONITORING: TO NOTE THE LATEST ACCOUNT RECORDS.

413.1 It was **NOTED** that progress reports for 2026/27 were currently in the process of being prepared by the RFO.

413.2.1 The Chair advised members on account records for the financial year ending 31 March 2026, referring to the RFO financial report that had been circulated to members by email on 14 May 2026:

### i) Bank – Cash and Investment Reconciliation and to Note Deposits and Investments held.

It was **NOTED** that the cash book closing balance to 31 March 2026 was £245,087.68, after having allowed for year-end adjustments. This was represented by the following:

	£
Barclays Bank Current Account	17,098.33
Business Premium Account	14,720.53
Nationwide Building Society	85,821.78
Unity Trust Bank Current Account	15,785.37
Unity Trust Bank Savings Account	25,850.46
Hinckley & Rugby Building Society	85,811.21
Lloyds Bank Charge Card	<u>0</u>
	245,087.68

### ii) Payment Analysis.

There were no figures presented.

### iii) To Approve/Ratify any required Payments and Internal Transfers (if required).

The Chair called upon members to ratify a payment of £75 to the Lindfield Branch of the Royal British Legion in respect of a contribution towards the Poppy Appeal 2025. This item of expenditure had been met from the Chairman's Fund.

The above was **NOTED** and **APPROVED**.

### iv) To Approve Adjusted Earmarked Reserve Balances at Year-End 31 March 2026.

The Chair reminded members that the closing balance of total earmarked reserves held as of 31 March 2026 had been revised to £136,333.74, after having allowed for year-end adjustments.

It was **NOTED** that members of Full Council had approved the adjusted closing balance at their meeting held on 14 May 2026.

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

414.1 The Chair advised members that Barclay Bank had finally approved the Council's request to close the Business Current account. A closing balance of £92.83 had been transferred to the Unity Trust Bank current account.

The above was **NOTED**, and thanks were conveyed to the RFO for her assistance in managing this request.

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### **415. INTERNAL CONTROL CHECK OF ACCOUNTS: FOR THE INVOICE PERIOD JANUARY TO MARCH 2026.**

415.1 The Chair reported that Cllr Lowman had completed an internal control check of accounts for the invoice period January to March 2026 on 18 May 2026, which had included verification of bank reconciliations in respect of all accounts held. There were no matters arising.

The above was **NOTED**.

### **416. TOILETS ON THE COMMON PROJECT: TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS (IF REQUIRED).**

416.1 The Chair provided an update and reported that the working group was procuring a map of Lindfield Common, which would show the location of all utility services. This would help determine whether alternative positions for the facilities might be viable from a utility standpoint.

The above was **NOTED**.

### **417. PLAN 23-27: TO NOTE UPDATES AND CONSIDER THE REPORT ON THE PROPOSED RESIDENTS SURVEY.**

417.1 The Chair reported that a residents' survey would be launched on Lindfield Village Day. This would initially be offered in digital form using SurveyMonkey. Paper copies would be made available upon request.

The above was **NOTED**.

### **418. CONSULTATIONS: TO CONSIDER RESPONSES TO THE SHAPING WEST SUSSEX CONSULTATION.**

418.1 The Chair advised members that the Government had rejected the initial proposal that had been submitted and they were now seeking views on a potential modification. Concerns had been raised regarding proposals received from across West Sussex and East Sussex and Brighton and Hove, and the modification would now see two unitary authorities for West Sussex:

- Adur, Arun and Worthing.
- Chichester, Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex.

Full Council had asked members of this committee to agree on a response. After having given the matter full and careful consideration members remained in favour of the original proposal including the reasons that were stated in support of this. Concern was raised regarding the balance of tax funding that might result if the modified proposal was to progress.

The above was **NOTED**, and it was **AGREED** that the Clerk would draft a response in conjunction with the Devolution Working Group.

### **419. CLERK AND RFO REPORT.**

419.1 Members **NOTED** updates relating to the following items:

#### a) Clerk.

The clerk provided a verbal report:

- i) The Clerk expressed his gratitude to members of staff and council members for their assistance attending the Parish meeting.
- ii) A six-monthly fire alarm service had been carried out on 26 May 2026. It was now a requirement for the building to be recorded in zones as opposed to referring to the ground floor and first floor.
- iii) The Chair of Council had organised a colouring activity and guess the number of sweets in a jar activity for children to support the Lindfield Village Day stall.

#### b) RFO.

The Chair referred members to the RFO report that had been circulated with the agenda:

- i) RFO had joined a Webinar training session offered by Rialtas Business Solutions Limited free of charge on 12 March 2026 to assist with year-end preparation of accounts.
- ii) The closedown of accounts 2025/26 had been completed in conjunction with Rialtas Business Solutions Limited on 1 May 2026.

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

- iii) The external auditor had confirmed additional financial information that would be required to complete section 2 of the AGAR, noting that expenditure and income had exceeded the £200,000 threshold.
- iv) The Lloyds Bank charge card terms and conditions changed with effect from 28 April and would be revised again on 1 June 2026.
- v) A claim for VAT refund totalling £3,509.56 for the invoice period January to March 2026 had been submitted to HMRC and payment received on 13 May 2026.
- vi) The RFO had expressed her gratitude towards Cllr Lowman carrying out the recent internal control check of accounts.
- vii) Members were reminded that the year-end internal audit of accounts was due to take place on 3 June 2026. This would be the final year of a three-year long-term agreement.
- viii) Members had been provided with an update on the level of funds that had been transferred following receipt of the precept. Approval had been sought in conjunction with the Chair and Vice Chair of Council to transfer a smaller balance of £94,250.
- ix) On checking the Unity Trust Bank current account, a credit of £92.83 had been received on 21 May 2026. Whilst the Council had not yet received written confirmation, it was apparent that the Barclays Bank current account was no longer accessible online. The payment received had corresponded with the balance shown on the most recent Barclays Bank statement less 2 x monthly account fees totalling £17.00.

419.2 It was **NOTED** that Cllr Beecroft would like to attend the year-end internal audit of accounts that was due to take place on 3 June 2026.

### **420. WORKING GROUP REPORTS: TO CONSIDER THE MEMBER UPDATES AND ANY ITEMS FOR DECISION.**

420.1 There were no reports or updates to consider.

### **421. POLICY DOCUMENTS: TO CONSIDER ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEW OF THE PENSIONS DISCRETION POLICY.**

421.1 The Chair referred to the current Pensions Discretion Policy, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda. Members had been advised that this was last reviewed in 2024 and were reminded that a review should take place at least every three years. The Council's pensions administrator had been provided with a copy. The Clerk was not aware of any changes being required and was now seeking approval for the Policy to be agreed to as presented. The alternative option would be to task the Policies Working Group for further scrutiny.

The above was **NOTED**, and after having given the matter full and careful consideration, it was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Pensions Discretions Policy be adopted as presented.

### **422. RISK MANAGEMENT: TO CONSIDER ANY RISK ASSESSMENTS.**

422.1 There were no risk assessments to consider.

### **423. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS, AND TO RECEIVE ANY ATTENDANCE REPORTS.**

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

The Chair had reminded members to take advantage of training opportunities as and when they became available.

The above was **NOTED**.

### **424. 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.**

424.1 There were no matters arising.

The meeting concluded at 20.17 hours.

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Date of next meeting 2 July 2026.

Approved.....Chair

Date .....

DISCLAIMER

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