

East Farndon Parish Council
MINUTES
Wednesday 18th March 2026
East Farndon Village Hall 19:15

Email: clerk@eastfarndon-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.eastfarndon.org

Present:

Bernie Fallon (Chair)

Mervyn Curtis

Samantha Beesley

Melanie Duke

Sarah Gresly (Clerk)

Two Members of the Public

Meeting Commenced: 19:15

Year Month Item	The following business was transacted:	
2026 03 01	Apologies for absence. <i>RESOLVED: Apologies were received from Cllr Hodgetts.</i>	
2026 03 02	Declarations of Interest and Dispensation. <i>RESOLVED: None.</i>	
2026 03 03	Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting on 21 st January 2026. <i>RESOLVED: The Minutes were approved by Council and signed by the Chair.</i>	
2026 03 04	Matters Arising.	
	ACTION	PROGRESS
	Cllr Fallon to organise repairs to the bus shelter.	The externals have been painted by residents and few outstanding points – should be resolved by the Spring.
	Cllr Fallon to organise repair to Clerk's laptop keyboard.	Replacement keys purchased – to be fitted.
	Cllr Beesley to progress options for a new village sign.	<i>Discussing with Clerk at the moment, and quotes are being sourced.</i>
	Cllr Fallon to lead a Spring Renovation Working Group.	Waiting on timeline from contractor.
	Cllr Fallon to progress speed reduction measures.	Discussed later at this meeting.
	All Councillors to actively encourage villagers to consider the Parish Councillor vacancy.	<i>Ongoing.</i>
	Clerk to confirm acceptance of BRM quotes for Spring work, and obtain a timescale for the work.	Acceptance of quote sent to BRM. Timeline is dependent on weather – a rough idea of when a timescale has been requested.
	Add potential candidates to the list and agree allocation of contacts. (All)	<i>Cllr Fallon to allocate the contacts on the list to each Councillor.</i>
	To confirm the timeline for the work needs to be completed and to co-ordinate with the Burial Ground Committee regarding work to provide an update in January's meeting. (TK)	Completed.
	To submit the precept form to West Northamptonshire Council. (Clerk)	Completed.
	To determine whether Assertion 10 this is a legal requirement. (Clerk)	To be presented at this meeting.

	To present a proposed IT policy to the next meeting. (Clerk)	To be presented at this meeting.
	To do a final review of the Emergency Plan. (PH)	Completed.
	To arrange for the publication of the Emergency Plan on the website. (Clerk)	<i>Cllr Duke will send the copy of the Plan to the Clerk for publication.</i>
	To sign the Council up to the Women's Charter. (Clerk)	Completed.
	To renovate the Burial Ground notice board. (BGC)	<i>To be started at the start of April.</i>
	To obtain a copy of the Biodiversity original grant application. (Clerk)	Completed.
	To complete the WNC Highways survey. (BF)	Completed.
	To complete the WNC Planning survey. (Clerk)	Completed.
	To purchase the items for the Biodiversity grant Burial Ground project. (PH)	<i>Bird boxes, compost bin and flower plugs have been purchased. Burial committee to meet and plant/install at the start of April.</i>
	To update the website with information about the village gateway sign being repaired. (Clerk)	<i>Waiting on Highways to complete – will take approximately 20 weeks.</i>
2026 03 04A	<p>Councillor Update –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resignation of Cllr Tom Knott. <p><i>RESOLVED: Council received the resignation of Tom Knott, effective from 8th February. Council wished to record its thanks to Tom for his contribution and dedication to the village over the past few years. Council extends its best wishes to him for the future.</i></p> <p><i>Council discussed the redistribution of Tom Knott's responsibilities and considered which Councillors would take on each of these roles, including Cllr Beesley and Cllr Duke assisting Cllr Curtis with the defibrillator and Cllr Curtis agreeing to be Vice Chair until the May annual meeting.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-option of Manoj Parmar. <p><i>RESOLVED: Manoj Parmar submitted a completed Co-option Application Form requesting to join the Council. Council voted unanimously to co-opt Manoj Parmar, and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly completed.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casual Vacancy still available. <p><i>RESOLVED: Discussed as part of item 2026 03 04.</i></p>	
2026 03 05	<p>Public Participation.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: A resident addressed the Council regarding recent damage to their property and measures that had been taken to prevent this from happening in the future. It was noted that some residents had provided feedback about the protective measures that were being introduced. Given the poor state of the verges/road/pavement.</i></p> <p><i>Council agreed to contact Highways to explore possible solutions to improve the safety and accessibility of the tight corner.</i></p>	
2026 03 06	<p>Finance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank Reconciliation. <p><i>RESOLVED: Council received the bank reconciliation for review. The reconciliation was approved.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Vs. Actual. <p><i>RESOLVED: Council was presented with the Budget Vs. Actual financial information.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payments to be Approved. <p><i>RESOLVED: All payments below were approved.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Precept Communication. <p><i>RESOLVED: Council was informed that Council Tax bills will shortly be issued to residents. Council agreed that no additional communication would be sent.</i></p>	

- Discussion of Banking Arrangements.

RESOLVED: The Clerk proposed that banking arrangements be moved to Unity Trust Bank, noting that it specialises in supporting Parish Councils and that the service from the current provider had been poor. Council approved the change to Unity Trust Bank at a cost of £7 per month.

AP: To progress the transfer to Unity Trust Bank. (Clerk)

- Appointment of Internal Auditor.

RESOLVED: The Clerk proposed that Council appoint the same Internal Auditor as in previous years. Council approved this proposal.

Payee	Reason	Amount	VAT	Method
Parish Online	Membership	£48.00	£8.00	Online
Valda Energy	Street Lighting Electricity	£2.67	£0.12	DD
Valda Energy	Street Lighting Electricity	£56.10	£2.67	Online
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	£4.25		Online
S Gresly	Salary/Homeworking Jan 2026	£388.50		Online
The Doodle Cloud	Website Hosting	£78.00	£13.00	Online
EON Solutions	Street Lighting Maintenance	£38.40	£6.40	Online
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	£4.25		Online
Paul Hodgetts	<i>Biodiversity Project Expenses</i>			
	Composter	£72.90	£12.16	Online
	RSPB	£76.20		Online
	Wildflower Seeds	£45.97		Online
	Clay Wildflower Plugs	£189.99		Online
S Gresly	Salary/Homeworking Feb 2026	£388.50		SO
BHA Trees	Treework - PiCUS Tomography Test	£312.00	£52.00	Online

2026 03 07 To receive an update on progress with the West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Biodiversity Grant Project.
RESOLVED: Under item 2026 03 04, it was confirmed that the Burial Grounds Committee had purchased items for the project, including a composter, bird boxes and plant plugs. Council was informed that £372.98 of the grant had been spent to date, leaving £33.02 remaining to be used before the deadline of 31 March 2026.

2026 03 08 Burial Ground:

- To receive a report from the Burial Ground Committee.

RESOLVED: Council received the report, which confirmed that the levelling of graves and the annual review would be carried out during the first week of April, alongside the biodiversity project and the noticeboard refurbishment.

- To receive a report on the recent PiCUS tomography tree test.

RESOLVED: Council was informed that the test had been completed and had not identified any cause for concern. It was recommended that the tree be re-tested in two years

AP: To diarise the next PiCUS tomography tree test. (Clerk)

- To consider seeking an arborist's survey for trees of concern.

RESOLVED: Council was informed that the Tree Wardens had been approached by a member of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) regarding concerns about some trees in the burial ground. Council noted the PCC's concerns and agreed to arrange a review of all of the burial ground trees and to take action, if appropriate, to those

	<p>that pose any immediate safety risks. It was further agreed to contact the Arboriculture Course at Moulton College to enquire whether they would be willing to visit the site and provide recommendations.</p> <p>AP: To contact contractors to arrange an inspection of the trees. (Clerk, MP and SB)</p> <p>AP: To contact Moulton College to enquire whether they would be willing to provide support. (BF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss risk assessments. <p><i>RESOLVED: Council was informed that the insurance provides cover based on risk assessments being in place. Council agreed for a risk assessment to be drafted and reviewed at the next meeting.</i></p> <p>AP: To draft and circulate a Risk Assessment. (Clerk)</p>
2026 03 09	<p>To discuss the essential qualification criteria for co-opting Councillors. (BF)</p> <p><i>This item was withdrawn.</i></p>
2026 03 10	<p>To receive a report from the Staffing Committee. (Staffing Committee)</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Council received a report from the Staffing Committee regarding the Clerk's six-month review. Council approved the Clerk as a permanent member of staff and noted that, in accordance with the contract, the Clerk's hourly rate will increase from April.</i></p> <p>AP: To amend the Clerk's wages standing order from April onwards. (Clerk)</p>
2026 03 11	<p>To receive an update regarding Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. (Clerk)</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Council was informed that there was there is no legal requirement to be compliant with Assertion 10. Council agreed that it would declare non-compliance with Assertion 10, but would work towards compliance, aiming to be compliant by the end of the next financial year.</i></p> <p>AP: To send Cllr Parmer requirements for assertion 10. (Clerk)</p>
2026 03 12	<p>To receive an update on WNC's Local Plan and Harborough District Council's Local Plan. (MD&MC)</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Council was informed that Harborough District Council's (HDC) Local Plan is at a different stage to West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) and is currently at Schedule 19</i></p> <p><i>Council received an overview of WNC's Local Plan, noting that the four Local Green Spaces proposed by the Council have been accepted (Village Green, Marriott Green, Church Grounds, and the Church Burial Ground & Extension). It was also confirmed that East Farndon has been classified as a small settlement/hamlet — the smallest of the four settlement categories set by WNC — and that, due to this reclassification, defined settlement confines are not required as WNC considers the area to be 'Open Countryside'.</i></p> <p><i>Council was informed that a letter had been received from a resident who had queried the inclusion of 'Special Landscape Areas'. It was confirmed that WNC had designated these areas without input from the Parish Council. It was reported that, as part of the 2024 consultation, the Parish Council queried the exclusion of the parcel of land between East Farndon and the county border in the 'Special Landscape Areas' and requested for it be included in future drafts. It was noted that no response was received from WNC regarding this enquiry so Council agreed to resubmit this request as part of the current consultation and to ask WNC to provide feedback if the land inclusion cannot be approved. It was acknowledged that all members of the village are encouraged to comment on WNC's proposal, and it was recommended to inform the resident that they may do so as part of the formal consultation.</i></p> <p>AP: To submit Council's feedback on the Local Plan. (MC)</p> <p>AP: To respond to the resident's letter regarding the 'Special Landscape Area'. (BF & Clerk)</p>
2026 03 13	<p>To discuss the WNC Local Nature Recovery Strategies. (Clerk)</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Council agreed that it did not need to submit a comment on the consultation.</i></p>
2026 03 14	<p>To discuss the proposed uncontested election costs received from WNC and consider a response. (Clerk)</p>

	<p><i>RESOLVED: Council agreed to respond to the consultation stating that retaining the fee at its current level is their preferred preference.</i></p> <p>AP: To complete the election costs consultation. (Clerk)</p>
2026 03 15	<p>To discuss issues regarding Highways and transport. (BF)</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Council was informed that Highways had been chased regarding the speed-limit reduction and had confirmed that they are awaiting contractors to install the 40mph signage. Council agreed that a news article should be published on the website once the signs have been installed.</i></p> <p><i>Council was also informed that updated speed-monitoring figures would be circulated. It was noted that overall speeds are decreasing (approx. 80,000 vehicles per month), although traffic volumes are increasing.</i></p> <p>AP: To publish a news article on the website regarding the 40mph signage. (MC)</p>
2026 03 16	<p>To receive an update regarding the defibrillator. (MC)</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Council was informed that the defibrillator had been out of action while awaiting a new battery. It was noted that alternative suppliers had been explored to assess whether a better service could be obtained; however, it was felt that the current provider remained the most cost-effective option. Council further noted that, in future, replacement parts would be ordered in advance. Council was also informed that a new process has been established for reviewing the defibrillator.</i></p>
2026 03 17	<p>To discuss the Annual Parish Meeting rebrand.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Council received a proposal to rename the event to 'An Evening for Our Village' to reflect the resident driven nature of the event. It was noted that the evening provides an opportunity for residents to connect with local organisations that support the village and to share their views. Council agreed to adopt the new name.</i></p> <p>AP: To advertise the event on the website and social media platforms. (MC)</p>
2026 03 18	<p>To discuss the village Spring Clean.</p> <p><i>The village Spring Clean will take place on Saturday the 21st of March Council has purchased tools for the litter-picking, and arrangements have been made with WNC for the collection of the waste bags.</i></p> <p><i>This item was not discussed.</i></p>
2026 01 19	<p>To receive an update regarding footpaths.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Following discussion with the Footpath Warden, Council was informed that the path next to the Village Hall has been renovated and repaired.</i></p> <p><i>Council was also notified that a resident had reported that three of their stiles had been vandalised.</i></p>
2026 01 20	<p>Correspondence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communication from resident enquiring Council's response to WNC's Local Plan regarding "Special Landscape Areas". Item discussed as part of item 2026 03 12.</i> • <i>Communication was received from the Chair of the Welland Valley Neighbourhood Forum (Market Harborough) enquiring about a potential bus link to East Farndon.</i> <p>AP: To prepare a communication to gather residents' views. (MC&MD)</p>
2026 01 21	<p>Any Other Business.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: There were no further matters for discussion.</i></p>
2026 01 22	<p>Date and Time of next meeting.</p> <p><i>An Evening for our Village at 7pm on 22nd April. Next Council Meeting 20th May.</i></p>
2026 01 23	<p>Meeting Closure.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED: Meeting closed at 22:00.</i></p>

Signed that the Minutes are a true and accurate record:

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Chair

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Date

DRAFT

Bank Reconciliation as at close of business on 10th March 2026

Balance as at 31st December 2025

Current account	£10,598.31	
Deposit account	£11,934.55	
		£22,532.86

Income

Interest (Deposit account)	£16.06
Compensation (Current account)	£125

Expenses

Payee	Reason	Amount	VAT	Method
Parish Online	Membership	£48.00	£8.00	Online
Valda Energy	Street Lighting Electricity	£2.67	£0.12	DD
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BHA Trees	Treework - PiCUS Tomography Test	£312.00	£52.00	Online

£1,705.81

Balance as at 10th March 2026

Current account	£9,017.50	
Deposit account	£11,950.61	
		£20,968.11

Actual v. Budgeted Spending as at 10th March 2026

	Precept Agreed	Expenditure to Date	Balance
Streetlighting and Maintenance	£1,400.00	£667.31	£732.69
NCALC	£300.00	£291.52	£8.48
Insurance	£1,000.00	£692.63	£307.37
S137 Spending	£400.00	£128.76	£271.24
Training	£100.00	£146.00	-£46.00
Mowing of Burial Ground/Hedges	£3,600.00	£2,605.00	£995.00
Clerk Gross Salary	£4,171.00	£5,363.35	-£1,192.35
Parish Council/Clerk Expenses	£1,140.00	£684.90	£455.10
Bin Collection	£705.00	£705.18	-£0.18
Defibrillator Expenses	£200.00	£135.00	£65.00
Election Expenses	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00
Other		£377.80	-£377.80
TOTAL	£13,516.00	£11,797.45	£1,718.55
Spending from Reserves (see below)		£1,121.25	
VAT		£384.31	
TOTAL PAYMENTS		£12,918.70	

RESERVES		Receipts	Payments	Balance
Renovation of Village Spring	£1,500.00		£0.00	£1,500.00
Burial Ground/Churchyard Maintenance	£3,500.00	£500.00	£340.00	£3,660.00
War Memorial Maintenance	£3,026.63		£721.35	£2,305.28
Fixed Asset Spending	£954.00		£59.90	£894.10
Village Sign Development	£400.00		£0.00	£400.00
TOTAL	£9,380.63		£1,121.25	£8,759.38