

All minutes are draft and subject to approval at the next meeting

FERRING PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the meeting of FERRING PARISH COUNCIL held on **Monday 21st September 2026** the Village Hall. The meeting commenced at 7.30pm.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Councillors, Clare Royal (Chairman), Ruth Arnold (Vice Chairman), Roger Elkins, Andy Walker, & Denise Loydell.

West Sussex County Councillor: Councillor Roger Elkins

Arun District Councillor: Councillors Roger Elkins & Mark Turner

Residents: There were two residents in attendance

Councillor Clare Royal, Chairman, welcomed all present to the meeting and commenced the formal proceedings.

01-09-2026 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Simon Ash, Stuart Davies, John Tero, Jack Boyle & Graham Bootle. The apologies were accepted.

02-09-2026 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

03-09-2026 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

04-09-2026 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 20th July 2026.

The Minutes of the Full Council meeting 20th July 2026 were approved by Council. The minutes were signed by the Chairman for this meeting presiding as a correct record

05-09-2026 Actions update from the last meeting

There was nothing to mention.

06-09-2026 Council approved the Terms of Reference for each Committee

The Terms of Reference for Roads, Community & Sports, Planning & Licensing, Finance & General Purposes & Environment Liaison Committees were approved by Council.

The above was **RESOLVED** by Full Council.

07-09-2026 To receive and consider reports from Committees including the authorisation of orders for payment:

a. **Environment Liaison Committee** - Councillor John Tero, meeting held 27th July.

a. Warren Pond Maintenance

Council noted the recent tree works carried out in a number of areas where maintenance cutting was required. As the pond was dry, this provided a good opportunity to undertake the necessary maintenance before substantial rainfall occurred and the pond refilled.

b. National Emergency Briefing

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Council noted that, at the Environment Liaison Committee meeting on 27th July and the Roads, Community & Sports Committee meeting on 10th August, the National Emergency briefing film, it was agreed to arrange a showing at the Village Hall on 26th October. This is a joint venture between Ferring Parish Council, Ferring Conservation Group & Ferring Village Hall Trustees. The Village Hall has kindly offered the venue free of charge, with the Ferring Conservation Group organising teas and coffees and Ferring Parish Council providing biscuits.

Tickets will be available from the Parish Office on a first-come, first-served basis. Posters will be displayed, and details of the event have also been included in the recently delivered parish flyer.

c. FPC Contractor/ Handyman Vacancy

The Clerk advised that a number of applications had been received for the FPC Contractor/Handyman vacancy. Councillor John Tero contacted the applicants to discuss their experience and suitability for the role and provided Council with his assessment and ranking of the candidates.

Council agreed that members of the Environment Liaison Committee will interview the shortlisted applicants prior to a final decision being made at the Full Council meeting on 19th October.

Councillors Clare Royal and Ruth Arnold would like to be involved with the interview process.

The above was **RESOLVED** by Full Council.

b.Planning & Licensing – Councillor Ruth Arnold, meetings held 7th & 21st September 2026
A Planning & Licensing Committee meeting was held earlier this evening, with one objection.

c.Neighbourhood Development Plan Committee – no meeting held.

There was nothing to mention.

d.Roads, Community & Sports Committee - Councillor Clare Royal, meeting held 10th August

a. Committee Working Group

With reference to Parking Village Centre & Sea Lane/Rife Way Junction

Consultation/Questionnaire update, the Committee Working Group will meet to examine the analysis results in detail, identify key themes and opportunities, and develop recommendations to support the next stages of the project.

Ferring Parish Council is committed to keeping residents informed throughout the process. Updates on the Questionnaire/Consultation findings and any recommendations will be shared in future editions of the Parish Flyer and on the Parish Council website as the project progresses.

It should also be noted that any proposals arising from the Questionnaire/Consultation that relate to the public highway will need to be submitted to West Sussex County Council (WSCC) as the Highway Authority, for consideration and approval. While the Parish Council can make recommendations and advocate on behalf of residents, decisions relating to the public highway ultimately rest with WSCC.

b. Level Crossing Matters – Undertaking a Local Survey

Councillors will recall that at Full Council on 18th March 2026, minute item 06-03-2026 (d, f), this matter was discussed.

Council noted that in summer 2024, East Preston Parish Council (EPPC) held a meeting with Network Rail, Stagecoach Group, County and District Councillors, and local residents to discuss ongoing concerns regarding the level crossing in East Preston. Following that

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meeting, a number of resolutions were agreed in relation to potential improvements, which Network Rail have confirmed have since been addressed.

The Clerk has subsequently raised with Network Rail the issue of extended gate closure times, and Network Rail are currently obtaining relevant operational data. In the meantime, it was suggested undertaking a local survey at different times of day to record:

- when the gates are closed,
- the duration of closures, and
- the number of trains passing during those periods.

The local survey is ongoing, and results have been received to date. Council thanked everyone who has been involved in carrying out and supporting the survey.

Councillor Roger Elkins has provided data from Network Rail. The report shows down times of the level crossing gates with the average barrier down time.

e. Finance & General Purposes Committee (including the authorisation of orders of payments and recommendations from the Committee). Councillor Graham Bootle, Meeting held 7th September

- a. Accounts and Finance** – Income & Expenditure June & July 2026 – Approved
- b. Environment Liaison Committee** – Council ratified the expenditure of the pond works under Financial Regulation 6.5 I & ii at £500.
- c. Christmas Tea** – The Village Hall Trustees have approached the Parish Office regarding a proposed Christmas Tea for local residents on 11th December.

The Village Hall Trustees have offered to organise the event and have asked whether the Parish Council would consider this as a joint event and contribute £500 towards the costs. The anticipated overall cost of the event is in the region of £800–£1,000.

Council approved a Parish Council contribution of £500 towards the Christmas Tea and agreed to support the event as a joint initiative with the Village Hall Trustees.

The above is **RESOLVED** by Full Council.

08-09-2026 Parish Clerk Report including Financial Matters – The Clerk will report
There was nothing to report.

09-09-2026 Council noted payments made under dispensation for expenditure for Committee minuted instruction.

There were no payments.

10-09-2026 Annual Accounts & External Audit 2025 - 2026 - The Clerk advised Council that the External Audit 2025 - 2026 has been signed off and returned with minor comments. The notice of Conclusion has been circulated to councillors and is available on the parish council website.

The above is noted by Full Council.

11-09-2026 ADC Economy Committee Meeting –

The Clerk provided an overview of the meeting advising that before the Officers recommendation was considered, an amendment was put forward by the Vice Chairman. The recommendation had been to allocate an annual revenue budget of £8,000 to deliver the required maintenance works through the annual budget-setting process. However, the amendment was to proceed with the proposed £317,000 capital improvement scheme from future capital programme budgets and to introduce parking enforcements and charges.

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Result vote for the amendment was 4 for, 4 against – casting vote to the Chairman voted for. So, results 5 – 4 and this vote was carried and council will proceed the proposed £317,000 capital improvements scheme.

It was noted that WSCC will not support the introduction of enforcement and parking charges, as the land is not included within the Council's Off-Street Parking Order and it was noted that the other landowners do not have enforcement or charging.

The Committee approved the progression of the refurbishment and improvement of the Ferring Rife Public Conveniences, utilizing the existing capital budget allocation of £97,000 together with the additional £25,000 contribution from Ferring Parish Council (£122,000 in total), subject to procurement requirements, statutory approvals and confirmation that the costs remain within approved budget provision. Results unanimously for and approved.

Council noted outcome of the meeting.

12-09-2026 Devolution Working Group – Council noted that Government has paused and is reviewing the local government reorganisation (LGR) programme, which includes the proposals affecting West Sussex. reorganisation for West Sussex. A decision is expected in October 2026. It has been confirmed that the ADC elections will be held May 2027.

13-09-2026 Ferring Village Hall Liaison (*Councillor Ruth Arnold*)

The main item for discussion is the Christmas Tea event. It was noted that Council has approved a Parish Council contribution of £500 towards the Christmas Tea and agreed to support the event as a joint initiative with the Village Hall Trustees.

14-09-2026 Reports from District and County Councillors

District Councillor Mark Turner advised the following:

- The ADC Economy Committee met and one of the agenda items was the capital project to upgrade the Ferring Rife Car Park as reported in FPC minute item 11-09-2026. There was however, disagreement with regards to the introduction of parking charges. The recommendation was approved as follows: Committee approves the continuation £317K of the capital improvements scheme and agreed to proceed with the scheme and then the introduction of parking charges at Ferring Rife Car Park. The proposals were in the capital budget for 2027 – 2028, how exactly the project works will be funded will be determined at a later date. The raising of parking charges is a separate matter and with the objection from WSCC Highways makes the imposition of charging regime an extremely remote possibility. As reported under FPC minute item 11-09-2026 progression of the refurbishment and improvement of the Ferring Rife Public Conveniences was approved
- District Councillor Mark Turner mentioned Arun District Council Budget Consultation 2027/2028. The consultation will be available until it closes on 20 October 2026: 2027-28 Budget Consultation
- The latest NPPF (August 2026) introduces significant changes to national planning policy, including a presumption in favour of approval for certain large-scale developments and fewer planning applications being determined by committee.
- With the Government pausing the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) programme, ADC officers can now refocus their time and resources on their core duties and ongoing work.

Arun District Councillor Roger Elkins advised the following:

- Noted Government announcement to pause the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) programme.

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- Noted the ADC Economy Committee decision relation to the Ferring Rife Car Park.
- Noted the latest NPPF (August 2026).

WSSC County Councillor Roger Elkins advised the following:

- WSSC are promoting an offer a variety of services through its Libraries to support residents.
- Encourage young people to attend reading workshops.
- WSSC offer support with local Emergency Plans.
- Secondary school applications for places must be submitted by 31st October online of via the submission team.

15-09-2026 Urgent matters arising, since the preparation of this Agenda & Items to be referred to next agenda.

There were no items.

Council noted the following

16-09-2026 Exclusion of the Public and The Press

The Committee, Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Resolved that Members of the Public and accredited representatives of the Press be excluded from the Meeting because of the confidential nature of the next item of business to be transacted.

17-09-2026 2025-26 National Salary Award - Council noted that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has agreed the new pay scales for 2026 - 27 to be implemented from 1 April 2026. The new pay scales will be backdated from 1st April 2026

The next meeting date is 19th October 2026.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.25pm

Mrs Nadine Phibbs,
Clerk to Ferring Parish Council

Minutes approved

Chairman **Date**