

## Farthingstone Parish Council

*Please note that these minutes are draft until approved at the next meeting of Farthingstone Parish Council*

### Minutes of FPC Meeting Monday 16 March 2026

Min No		Action
84/25	<p><b>Attendance:</b>                      Councillors: Peter Stanton (PS), John Acres (JA), Sarah J Skinner (SJS), Stewart Summers (SS), Richard Russell (RR)                      Parish Clerk: Debbie Mason (DM)                      Apologies: Ward Cllr David Smith                      Members of the public: Susan, Becky, Denise &amp; daughter &amp; partner</p>	
85/25	<b>Declaration of Interests:</b> None	
86/25	<b>Minutes of meeting 19 Jan 2025:</b> Agreed as a correct record and signed by PS.	
87/25	<p><b>Matters arising not listed elsewhere:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Golf Club:</b> Nothing further to report following the update at the last meeting.</li> <li>• <b>Village News:</b> Nothing further to report at present..</li> <li>• <b>Road repairs:</b> PS and JA summarised the current unsatisfactory state of the roads and the poor response from the authorities to the agreed problems. It was agreed to carry out a survey of local residents to find out the range of problems experienced and then to write a letter to WNC senior management - JA to draft. JA to also complete the 'Satisfaction survey' previously circulated.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DM</b></p> <p><b>JA</b></p>

88/25	<b>Public Forum:</b> See discussions below under Planning	
89/25	<p><b>Finance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DM presented the budget report for the financial year to 5 March. The balance on the ledger was a total of £3562. The projected balance remaining in the Bank at the end of the year (i.e. future 'Reserves') are approximately £3500. These are lower than expected due primarily to two large unforeseen expenditures – election costs (£1028) and 3 street lamps needing replacement (£945 ex VAT) – but still within the recommended range.</li> <li>• <b>Annual internal audit return:</b> DM said that external advice indicates that we will need a formal 'letter of engagement' with our internal auditor (John Mole) this year. DM to arrange.</li> <li>• <b>Street lamps:</b> The 3 replacement LED lamps have been fitted. PS suggested we explore the savings from switching off street lamps at midnight. DM reported that our current contract for electricity runs out at the end of July and quotes for a new contract are being sort (using the energy broker 'Clear Utility' recommended by NCalc). It was agreed that negotiations be delegated to DM and PS in order to take advantage of changing quotes.</li> <li>• <b>WNC 'non-contested' election costs:</b> DM reported that WNC are seeking views on how to allocate the costs of Parish Council elections where there is actually no contest. It was agreed to vote for 'Option C' which continues to divide costs according to size (resulting in a £50 charge rather than Option A's £225). Costs for contested elections will continue to be allocated as at present.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DM</b></p> <p><b>DM</b></p> <p><b>DM/PS</b></p> <p><b>DM</b></p>
90/25	<b>Social media report:</b> None.	<b>SJS</b>

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91/25	<b>Police Liaison report:</b> SS reported on advice from the police to keep garage doors closed. In previous summers, garden and sports equipment has been stolen from open unattended garages.	SS
92/25	<b>Cemetery Matters:</b> DM circulated proposals for an increase in Cemetery fees which were last reviewed in 2017. These were agreed (and will be published on the Farthingstone website). It was agreed that burial of ashes in the Churchyard creates no extra maintenance and any charges will continue to be left to the Church. It was agreed to buy compost bins for the Cemetery and Churchyard and thereby save the annual green bin costs. PS reported that the new grass seed is growing and the first cut will be carried out soon. It was noted that Mr Danes and team do an excellent job in mowing and maintaining both the Cemetery and Churchyard.	DM  PS
93/25	<b>Planning matters:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Planning application (Land behind The Nutshell):</b> JA reported on the update made to the application (which makes the access track to other properties clearer) and that the application will be going to Committee but there is no date set as yet. Denise – the owner – outlined her position and said that the application was submitted on behalf of her daughter and partner. Denise apologised for any misunderstandings in preparing the application. She indicated that the proposed height of the development had been reduced so as to reduce its impact on neighbours.</li> <li>• <b>WNC draft Local Plan:</b> JA reported that most of the plan was similar to the previous Daventry and South Northants plans – with the addition of large extra development sites which are concentrated next to our towns. He suggested little need for comments except for better clarification of what ‘self build’ actually means. JA to draft response (closing date 27.3.26).</li> <li>• <b>Local Nature Recovery Strategy:</b> JA reported that there seemed to be nothing controversial in the proposed strategy and on the whole he was in favour. JA to draft response (closing date 25.3.26).</li> </ul>	JA  JA
94/25	<b>Updating policies/procedures:</b> A proposed update of the ‘Standing Orders’ (added to the website) was agreed. Other updates ongoing.	DM
95/25	<b>Correspondence:</b> DM reported a request from NCALC for views on their draft ‘Strategic Plan’ for the next few years. She said NCALC provide an excellent advisory service and she proposed to respond asking them to continue as now.	DM
96/25	<b>AOB:</b> <b>Training:</b> DM circulated a list of Councillor training areas suggested by NCALC. She asked Councillors to discuss with her any areas where they felt a need for more knowledge and arrangements would be made as appropriate. <b>Litter-picking:</b> PS said that Steve Sayers currently does an excellent job in keeping our roads tidy and they had agreed there was no need at present for a ‘litter-pick. It was agreed that a letter of thanks be sent to Steve – and also to Melissa for her maintenance of the dog poo bin.	DM  DM
	<b>Date of next (annual) meeting: Monday 18 May 2026.</b> (PS asked SS to report for the Joy Mead; JA for the Village Hall and RR for the PCC) Dates of further meetings in 2026: July 20, Sept 21, Nov 16	SS/JA/RR

Signed as a true record:

Date: