



# Figheldean Parish Council

(Draft until signed at next meeting)

Minutes of meeting 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at Village Hall @7.30 pm

## Present

Cllr Tina Cole	Chair
Cllr Darrell Amison	
Cllr Angela Briggs	
Cllr Mark Christian	
Cllr Mazz Blake	
Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling	
Rachel Ure	Clerk

## In attendance:

PCSO Levi Morphy

## Questions from the public.

PCSO Levi Morphy was in attendance. The main current issue for Figheldean is Hare Coursing. This is being actively addressed by the Rural Team. Any Anti Social Behaviour in local areas is reduced.

PCSO Morphy advised that should residents see Hare Coursing in progress to contact 101 and not to approach the individuals directly. Indicators of Hare Coursing are 4x4's, people with lamps/torches and dogs.

PCSO Morphy would also be content to receive a message with any suspect vehicles registration numbers.

The new PC for Figheldean is PC Tom Newman. Cllr Amison will meet him in Feb/March and to pick up the Mill Pool project/issue.

The Parish Council thanked PCSO Morphy for everything she and the police are doing for our local area.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ACTION
1	<b>Apologies</b> Nil	
2	<b>Declaration of Interests</b> Nil	
3	<b>Minutes of the meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025</b> These were agreed as a true reflection of discussion and signed by the Chair.	
4	<b>Matters arising / Outstanding Actions</b>  <b>Ownership of path at side of School</b>	



	<p><b>Previous Action: Cllr Briggs to contact the Housing Association (Aster) in order to make further enquiries about the ownership of the path that runs alongside Robin's Way school.</b></p> <p>No response from the Housing Association re the ownership of the path. AB will chase up.</p>	<p>Cllr Briggs</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><b>Wiltshire Councillor Report</b></p> <p>The joint Avon Valley Stonehenge Area Board meeting will be repeated.</p> <p>There is a Community Safety meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> January.</p> <p>A parking query on Oak Lane was discussed. Cllr Blair-Pilling to come and do a site visit and visit with Cllr Christian and the parishioner who has raised the query.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Chair Councillor Report – Cllr Tina Cole</b></p> <p>Firstly, I'd like to welcome councillors back after the festive season. As we enter a new year, I'd like to welcome to our ranks Cllr Mazz Blake who has taken on the responsibly of the paying field, multi-court and second lead on our playground regeneration. A very warm welcome Mazz from us all.</p> <p>Councillors' responsibilities have had a re-jig and our Parish Clerk will be publishing then in due course.</p> <p>I'm delighted to say the new year sees us on a good fiscal footing allowing us to keep our precept for 2026-27 the same. With careful budgeting we have ensured the parish council's part of parishioners' council tax bill will remain unchanged. I'm sure we are all grateful for that so well-done team and in particular our Parish Clerk and RFO Rachel Ure.</p> <p>With winter hitting hard recently it was good to hear that the village resilience team were up to the task. They have been gritting key locations so a big thank you to every one of them. Its such a good team to have and we are grateful to them.</p> <p>The road surfacing work that is being carried out is a very welcome sight especially as residents have waited so very long for it. The Parish Council with Cllr Ange Briggs as highways lead have been pushing for this work to be carried out but we have had to wait on council contractors who have been incredibly busy. Hopefully now driving around the village will be a more pleasant experience.</p> <p>Robin's Ways School have started using the village hall facilities on a regular basis and will also be using the playing field with children under supervision on Friday afternoons when we enter the spring term.</p> <p>I popped into the local working men's club recently and saw how family friendly, welcoming and inclusive it has become over the last year. There is a wonderful atmosphere, and I'd like to recognise Doug Hall and the team for all their hard work in making it a true village asset. Well done.</p> <p>Finally, may I thank all councillors for their time and continued commitment to this council and our village. Your kind involvement is appreciated.</p>	



	<p>Cllr Cole also advised that she has agreed an arrangement for Robin's Way School to regularly utilise the playing field at a fee of £500 per year.</p> <p><b>Action: Cllr Cole to liaise with Robin's Way school with regards to the arrangement for using the playing field. An invoice to be issued in April, at the start of the financial year.</b></p>	<p>Cllr Cole</p>
<p>7</p>	<p><b>Other Organisation Reports</b></p> <p><b>Ablington Woods Conservation Group</b>          Jackie Dryden has confirmed that she has contacted Robins Way School suggesting some work the children could carry out in the woods.</p> <p>The conservation group is currently not carrying out any works because of the inclement weather conditions, but we have plans to plant 30 trees we have acquired from the Woodland Trust. This work is planned to take place in March. In the meantime, I have drawn up a map so that we can divide the area of the wood into sections and clear one section at a time then plant the trees.</p> <p>We will need to clear some of the trees, which we have earmarked so that this will let light in and clear space for the new trees. Unfortunately, with the nesting season starting in February this work will have to be delayed, although the trees can still be planted. They are currently being looked after in pots by two of our members, Claire Fraser and Sarah Russell who acquired them. Further detailed information with regards to financial support required from the Parish Council for this work has been requested.</p> <p>Ablington Woods are having a meeting on Sunday and more information will be available after that.</p> <p><b>Resilience Team.</b>          The team have been out gritting and are fully active.</p> <p>Guidance received at the last parish council meeting about the Resilience Team not removing any fallen trees has been noted. The team will mainly be dealing with issues around snow and ice. The Resilience Team will not be attending to anything that may occur on a public highway.</p> <p><b>Action – Cllr Amison to follow up on the insurance to ensure we are adequately covered.</b></p> <p>It was noted that it may be beneficial for the Parish Council to purchase some PPE, particularly Hi-Vis vests.</p>	<p>Cllr Amison</p>
<p>8</p>	<p><b>Councillor Reports</b></p> <p><b>Cllr Mark Christian</b>          Cllr Christian advised that a named poppy for fixing to lampposts in order to recognise the fallen from Figheldean would cost £5 each. Cllr Christian will identify who can print the required names on to each one.</p> <p><b>Planning</b>          Nil</p>	



### **Playpark**

Cllr Christian and Cllr Blake met with the contractor who installed the play equipment at Robin's Way School. They found it a very useful meeting in order to scope the art of the possible. An associated quote has been received, including sensory panels and a zip wire.

The equipment that is currently in place has been deemed fit for purpose but if we move or change anything then the equipment will come under the new regulations and all current equipment would then fail.

The quote for everything, including replacing the slide etc and the zip wire and grass matting, is for £32k. The zip wire is £5k. If we were to carry out the project in phases, the first phase will be about £25k and then £7k for the second phase.

Other contractors might have other ideas, but this initial quote gives us a figure to work towards in terms of fundraising. Other quotes will be sought and there may be grant funding options available to us.

The Councillors voted and all unanimously agreed to proceed with the playpark refurbishment as the next improvement project for the village.

It was agreed that the first step would be to hold a consultation meeting with residents to share our current ideas and seek their feedback, particularly in terms of what parishioners want from our playpark.

After this initial consultation meeting some competitive pricing to be obtained so that we can start to consider grant applications. We will need to raise 50% of the required funds ourselves.

A date of Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February, 5pm – 6pm, at the Village Hall was agreed for the Playpark Consultation meeting. To sell coffee and cake at this meeting to start some fundraising.

**Action: Parish Clerk to arrange for some Playpark collection buckets to be made and to create a poster in which to advertise the consultation meeting.**

Parish Clerk

**Cllr Darrell Amison**

### **Policing**

Police Constable 0413 Thomas NEWMAN has taken over as the designated PC for Figgeldean.

### **Neighbourhood Watch**

There are 27 members currently signed up to the Neighbourhood Watch scheme. This increased by 6 members after the last Neighbourhood Watch meeting. We will hold another meeting in the Summer, the national neighbourhood watch week is the 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

Some neighbourhood watch stickers will be received soon. It was agreed to purchase some more road signs. Three new road signs were agreed at a cost of £35 each. Cllr Amison to go ahead and order these.

### **Cllr Mazz Blake**

Cllr Blake provided an update on the Premises Licence for Figgeldean Village Community Events. They would normally have a TENS licence for Figgle Fest to play live music. The TENS licence only covers up to 499 people, including vendors and performers. Figgle Fest is now over this. They are therefore seeking to have our own Premises Licence for the field so that



alcohol can be served on the field. Tina is planning to undertake DPS training in order to become the licensee. The Parish Council would remain responsible for any furniture on the field (i.e. benches) but Tina, as part of the FVCE team, would be responsible for any activities that take place on the field as part of an FVCE event.

Cllr Amison asked if there is an upper limit to the number of people that can attend an event on the field? Do we know what the capacity of the field is? Tina confirmed that the new premises licence does not have an upper limit in terms of attendees.

One of the risks is catastrophic success. How do you manage the physical capacity of a large crowd? It was confirmed that the FVCE do have someone doing the event management this year, Nick Stokes. He will have a control centre. Cllr Amison recommended that the team need to know what the safe number is in terms of capacity in case need to start turning people away.

#### **Cllr Angela Briggs**

##### **Highways**

Road re-surfacing is underway over forthcoming weeks. Need to address the zig zags outside the school after the High Street has been resurfaced.

Cllr Briggs will carry out another grit bin survey to ensure we have enough supplies.

#### **Cllr Tina Cole**

##### **Ablington Woods**

Already covered.

#### **9 Clerks Report**

##### **Councillor Responsibilities**

Updated as per feedback and discussion at the last meeting.

##### **Assertion 10 Compliance**

Assertion 10 compliance refers to the new governance requirements for local councils regarding digital and data management, effective from the 2025/26 financial year.

##### **Overview of Assertion 10**

Assertion 10 is a new declaration introduced in the 2025 edition of the Practitioners' Guide by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP). It focuses on ensuring that parish and town councils have proper governance frameworks in place for their digital presence, data protection practices, and IT management. This assertion is mandatory for all councils completing their 2026 Annual Governance and Accountability Returns (AGAR).

There are a few actions to be completed to ensure that Figheldean Parish Council is fully compliant with Assertion 10, but the majority are already in place. The Parish Clerk will continue to work on these requirements.

The Clerk presented a number of documents to the Parish Council for approval.



**Documents for Councillor Approval:**

1. Accessibility Statement for website
2. Freedom of Information Policy
3. Privacy Notice
4. Data Protection Policy
5. IT Policy

All documents were approved.

**Action: Parish Clerk to arrange for all approved policies to be made available on the Parish Council website.**

**Parish Clerk**

**Accounts**

Expenditure since last meeting – all approved

Expenditure	Amount	Detail
Bank charges	£0.50	
Clerk Salary	£788.74	
Clerk HMRC Payments	£219.98	
Bawdens	£648	Grass cutting
Ian Grimes	£120	Dog Bins
Graham Watson	£280	Bins
Graham Watson	£85	Grass
Hills	£248.74	VH bins collection
Parish Clerk	£85.02	Councillor ID Badges
Direct IT Services	£54.88	
Parish Magazine Printers	£394	
Parish Magazine Expenses	£11.65	
RBL Poppy Appeal	£21.00	Poppy Wreath
Total	£2,957.51	
Receipts	Amount	Detail
Figheldean Village Hall	£90	Hire of VH Field – Durrington FC
Parish Magazine Donation	£20	
Ablington Woods Donation	£60	
Wiltshire Council	£798.60	Precept 2 <sup>nd</sup> Payment
Total	£968.60	

**Current Bank Balance @ 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026 is £22,567.96.**

**Financial Forecast to Year End**

We are currently anticipating an **underspend**, to budget, of £2,901.83. This is quite an achievement considering that at the start of the year our forecasted expenditure was more than our forecasted income. This was mainly due to increased Clerk salary to bring in line with Wiltshire pay scales (£1,359.10), increased costs from Bawdens (£200) and Hills (£269.15).

**Year End Summary**

2025/26 Opening Bank Balance	£14,289.99
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2025/26 Income – Forecast	£27,685.64
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£41,975.63</b>
2025/26 Expenditure - Forecast	£23,218.55
<b>2025/26 Closing Bank Balance - Forecast</b>	<b>£18,757.08</b>
Agreed buffer to retain	£5,000
Ablington Woods Income – to be held for Woods maintenance	£1,471.40
Anticipated Highways investment	£2,500
Left to invest (playpark / other projects)	£9,785.68

### 2026/27 Precept

The below information has already been provided and considered via email. Councillors have already reviewed the proposal for the 2026/27 precept, and it is formally recorded at this meeting that Councillors unanimously voted for Option 2.

For 2024/25 we set the precept at £20,358.52. This represented a 1% increase compared to the previous year.

For 2025/26 we also set the precept at £20,358.52, but this represented a 24.45% increase due to the reduction in our tax base from 231.61 in 2024/25 to 186.11 for 2025/26. This is due to the boundary change with Netheravon.

Whilst we have experienced increased costs from suppliers this year, we have only achieved an underspend due to pure luck that a lot of the contingency maintenance costs for facilities such as Ablington Woods, the Defibs and the Playpark have not been utilised this year.

For 2026/27 there has been a further, minor, change to our tax base. It has increased from 186.11 for 2025/26 to 188.61 for 2026/27. This means that if the precept amount was to remain the same, at £20,358.52 this would represent a 1.33% deduction in Council Tax for a Band D property.

Two options were presented for Councillors to vote on with regards to the 2026/27 precept.

1. **Option One. The precept value remains the same, at £20,358.52**, and this results in a 1.33% deduction in Council Tax for a Band D property (impact on other bands is displayed in the screenshot below, although noting the impact is much the same a cross all bands).
2. **Option Two. The % impact on Council Tax remains at 0%.** With a slight increase in tax base this would result in a minor increase in precept. This would increase the precept for Figheldean Parish Council from £20,358.52 to £20,632.05. Resulting in an additional £273.53 that could be used to invest within the Parish, particularly for planned improvement projects.

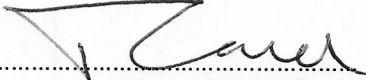
### 2026/27 Budget

An initial, draft, budget for 2026/27 has been prepared. Please see separate document for detail.

The Clerk & RFO is currently proposing a budget of £27,052.32 for 2026/27. This is a £931 increase on the budget figure agreed for 2025/26. This is predominately due to the transfer of



	<p>the Parish Clerk salary to Wiltshire Council pay scales. This was not formally included in the budget figure last year as arrangements for the change were still in hand.</p> <p>Note that this includes anticipated Highways Improvements costs which are not part of the annual precept payments from Parishioners but are an agreed spend of surplus as an investment into the Parish. Removal of these costs from calculations would bring the total budgeted expenditure (£24,552.32) under the budgeted income (£25,592.05).</p> <p>The Clerk has been asked to record these costs under an appropriate cost line for audit purposes.</p> <p>Budget figures will continue to be finalised over the coming weeks. Investigations have begun in to renewal of contracts for both grass cutting and waste collection from the Village Hall. It is hoped that some cost savings can be achieved.</p> <p><b>Action: Cllr Cole to request that Graham Watson trims the trees/hedges around the multicourt to ensure there is a one metre gap between the trees and the multicourt fence.</b></p>	Cllr Cole
10	<p><b>Other Parish Business</b></p> <p>An update was provided to Parish Councillors on the situation with parking outside of Brambles nursery, following an email received from them regarding an incident.</p>	
11	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>24<sup>th</sup> March 2026</p> <p>Closed at 21:05.</p>	

Signed .....  ..... Date ..... 30/3/26 .....