

Farningham Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Farningham held at Shand Hall, High Street, Farningham on Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 7pm.

1. Attendees and apologies for absence.

Attendees: Farningham Parish Councillors (FPC) Baker, Bourne, Burns, Cook, McGarvey and Salmon, Sevenoaks District Councillors (SDC) Ball and White, both in part.

In Attendance: two members of the public and the Clerk, Helen Penney.

Apologies: FPC Cllrs McGeough and Kent County Cllr Logen.

Cllr Bourne chaired the meeting in place of the Chair - Cllr Burns, who was present but unwell.

2. Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.

None.

3. To consider, and approve if appropriate, agenda items sufficiently confidential as to warrant exclusion of members of the press and public under the Admission to Meetings Act 1960.

None.

4. Nomination of a Member to complete the next Trident Reports for submission by 11 April, and 13 May 2026.

Cllr Salmon will complete the Trident report from the previous month. **Action: Cllr Salmon.**

As the next FPC meeting falls after the May deadline, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group may submit the report for May.

5. To receive a report from the County Councillor. (No decisions may take place as a result of this item).

Members noted the written report provided in advance of the meeting by Cllr Logen, appendix 1.

6. To receive a report from the District Councillors. (No decisions may take place as a result of this item).

Cllr White reported that:

- He has circulated news articles on Traveller sites following disruptions over the Easter weekend.
- He has supported a resident in Maplescombe regarding a pot hole.
- Round 2 of the Community Asset Transfers (CATs) were discussed at SDC Finance and Investment Advisory Committee (FIAC) on Tuesday 7 April 2026. Officers recommended that Alban Crescent and Oliver Crescent be transferred to FPC at nil cost. FIAC approved the recommendation and the matter will progress to SDCs Cabinet meeting on 21 April 2026.

Cllr Ball reiterated Cllr White's comments regarding the CATs and reported that:

- The Planning Inspector has allowed the appeal at Land North West Of Charton Manor, Gorse

Hill, Farningham, Kent DA4 0JU with costs awarded, planning application reference 25/00038/RFPIP. The main reason was insufficient highways evidence and it is likely that part two of the Permission in Principle application process will now be submitted.

Members requested that Cllrs Ball and White raise concerns with SDC and for a formal complaint to be submitted to Kent Highways regarding the lack of engagement which was the primary cause to the appeal being allowed and costs incurred by SDC. **Action: Cllrs Ball, White and the Clerk.**

Members requested that the Clerk contact Cllr Logen to request crash data and further explain the difficulties in obtaining such data. Cllr McGarvey will raise this with the Kent Association for Local Councils and, if appropriate, Cllr Bourne can raise at the Road Safety & Active Travel Group (RSATG) Seminar on 21 April 2026. **Action: Cllr Bourne, McGarvey and the Clerk.**

7. A Public Open Session. Members of the public will be welcome to address the Parish Council with any local concerns they have. Please note that each speaker will be allocated a maximum of three minutes and at the discretion of the Chair. (No decisions may take place as a result of this item).

The members of the public present had attended to observe the meeting.

8. Approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on the 11 March 2026.

The minutes from the full Parish Council meeting on 11 March 2026 were recorded as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

9. Clerks report. (No decision making may take place as a result of this item).

The Clerk reported that:

- An external contractor can remove fly tipping from Calfstock Lane car park as SDC has not been able to provide costs. Members approved that the waste is removed.
- West Kent Housing have advised that they do not intend to make any changes to the garages at Till Avenue. However, the Assets Team is considering if any changes can be made to the car park at Lime Tree House to discourage illegal right hand turns when leaving.
- The May Parish Council meeting will include the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair alongside appointments to committees, other bodies and special interest roles for the forthcoming year.

10. Planning.

10.1 To note and raise any questions to the planning log circulated by the Clerk on 31 March 2026.

Noted.

10.2 Planning Applications.

To consider any planning applications and to include any received by the Clerk after the agenda has been served to Councillors.

No additional applications have been received.

10.2.1 Reference: 26/00235/ADV

Site: Mercure Brands Hatch Hotel London Road West Kingsdown Kent DA3 8PE

Proposal: 1no. Illuminated totem single-sided display measuring 4m(H) x 2.1m(L) x 0.35m(W).

Illustrating the hotel's name, a photo and labels

Comments due: 10 April 2026

No comment.

10.2.2 Reference: 26/00373/FUL

Site: Maplebank Poultry Farm Maplescombe Lane Farningham Kent DA4 0JY

Proposal: Proposed change of use of land for the storage of trailers, and the siting of a skip, together with the reorganisation of car parking spaces.

Comments due: 12 April 2026

Objection:

1. History of Unlawful Development

The site has a history of 25 years of planning applications, the vast majority of which have been refused, including on referral to the Planning Inspectorate. FPC wants it noted that the applicants continue to submit applications to prolong operations that are not in accordance with planning law and whilst repeatedly ignoring enforcement notices.

2. Proposed Development Does Not Reduce Harm

This application proposes the demolition of a building erected without planning permission in 2022 - a structure that has been required to, but has not been removed. The application proposes relocating the outside storage of asbestos removal vehicles into the footprint of this building, a minor shift to the north that does not materially reduce visual impact. The storage will remain highly visible from Bridleway SD272, Footpath SD172, Maplescombe Lane, Botsom Lane, and Knatts Valley Lane.

3. Use of Site and Visual Impact

The application states that trailers will be "absent much of the time." Reports indicate that 12 or more decontamination trailers are regularly present. There is no reason to believe this pattern will change. The ongoing presence of vehicles and paraphernalia continue to dominate the site, detracting from the rural character of the surrounding area.

4. Planning Policy Considerations

The site:

- Only has planning permission for B8 use.
- Lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and a National Landscape.
- Is not supported by the Conservation Officer.
- Has previously been highlighted by SDC and PINS as sensitive to additional development: "The introduction of any additional built form or paraphernalia outside of the building could harm the openness of the Green Belt and the character of the surrounding countryside."

Relevant PINS findings include:

- The mixed use constitutes inappropriate development, which is harmful and contrary to national policy protecting the Green Belt.
- The site is widely visible and open storage conflicts with the rural character, harming the scenic beauty of the area.
- The mixed use, including partially collapsed buildings, fails to conserve or enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB, contrary to Policy LO8 of the Core Strategy and Policy EN5 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan.

10.3 To note planning applications received but not for comment:

10.3.1 Site: The Old Smithy 58 High Street Farningham Kent DA4 0DB

Noted.

Reference	Condition of 23/03266/FUL.
26/00680/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 8 (Construction Environmental Management Plan).
26/00620/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 7 (implementation of a watching brief).
26/00621/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 5 (phased contaminated land investigation of the site).

10.3.2 Site: Charton Manor Farm Gorse Hill Farningham Dartford Kent DA4 0JT

Noted.

Reference	Condition of 22/03410/FUL
26/00560/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 7 (Acoustic Assessment).
26/00642/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 9 (Contamination Investigation/ Remediation Strategy).
26/00643/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 11 (Details of the Provision of Parking).
26/00644/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 12 (Development, Details of Secure, Covered Bicycle Parking Facilities).
26/00645/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 13 (Details of the Location and Type of Electrical Vehicle Charging Point).
26/00646/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 14 (Details of Hard and Soft Landscaping across the Site).
26/00647/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 16 (Details of an Ecological Enhancement Plan).
26/00648/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 17 (Lighting Design Plan for Biodiversity).
26/00645/DETAIL	Details pursuant to condition 13 (Details of the Location and Type of Electrical Vehicle Charging Point).

10.4 Updates on enforcement cases and to highlight new activities or sites causing concern.

The Clerk reported that a large gate has been installed at Catahoula Fields and that details have been sent to SDC enforcement team.

11. Finance Items for noting and decision.

11.1 To approve items payable, and note items paid and receipts.

The items payable was approved and signed and items paid and receipts noted.

11.2 To note and raise any questions for the flexed budget March 2026.

Members noted that the flexed budget, that also sets out the end-of-year position for 2025/26.

Cllr Burns queried the overspend on projects. The Clerk advised that she would check the details, and advise back. **Action: Clerk.**

11.3 Grant request to the Darent River Preservations Society for a New Darent Action Plan.

Members resolved to contribute £300 towards the project and requested that the Clerk:

- requests that updates are provided
- advises when budgets are discussed, noting that the contribution resolved by Members is less than requested. However, as it is the start of the new financial year, FPC may be able to consider future contributions.

Action: Clerk.

12. Highways.

Members noted that Cllr Bourne is attending the Road Safety & Active Travel Group (RSATG) Seminar on 21 April 2026, and requested that questions be sent to Cllr Bourne in advance of that, for her to raise if the opportunity arises. **Action: All Cllrs and the Clerk.**

12.1 To note, discuss and agree any progress from highways since the last meeting.

Members noted that no additional information has been received.

12.1 Quote from SDC to provide extra parking at Oliver Crescent.

Members discussed the quote and whether FPC should investigate the project should a funding opportunity become available, most likely through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) board at SDC. The vote was split and the chair used her casting vote.

Members voted in favour of the Clerk investigating funding opportunities should an SDC spending board be announced, noting that timescales may be very tight and requesting that the matter be discussed by FPC again.

Members also resolved that should a CIL application be possible, FPC could contribute up to £10,000 from the Infrastructure Reserve.

13. To discuss the Community Asset Transfers and agree next steps following SDCs committee meeting on Tuesday 7 April 2026.

Members noted that the applications for Alban Crescent and Oliver Crescent would be considered by Cabinet on 21 April 2026 and that SDC Officers were recommending that Alban Crescent and Oliver Crescent be transferred to FPC at nil cost.

Members noted that the SDC-owned play equipment at Oliver Crescent is very dated and requested that the Clerk asks for it to be refurbished. **Action: Clerk.**

Members noted that residents are parking on the green at Alban Crescent and requested that SDC send letters, as this has previously been very effective. **Action: Clerk.**

14. Farningham Woods update.

Members noted that Cllr Bourne is meeting with Cllr White and, SDCs Dog Warden and Countryside

Rangers on Monday 13 April and that the deadline to submit an inShape article is 5 May that the Clerk will prepare when she returned from annual leave.

15. To confirm the Annual Parish Meeting, Monday 11 May 2026, and finalise details.

Members noted the date and time, and the organisations that had confirmed attendance. They also noted that there would be a mix of reports and stands, and requested that the Clerk organise refreshments, like last year, and name tags for members of the Parish Council. **Action: Clerk.**

16. Correspondence - To consider an email received regarding Pedham Place.

Members noted the correspondence and that FPC would follow the consultation process by discussing and submitting comments at each Regulation stage, with Regulation 19 expected this summer.

Urgent business that occurs and requires, attention before the next meeting that may be reported at the Chairman's discretion. (No decisions may take place as a result of this item).

None.

The meeting closed at 20:50.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 13th May 2026, 7pm.

Requests from Councillors for the next agenda due by 1st May 2026.

Items Paid

Farningham Parish Council PAYMENTS LIST

Voucher	Date	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
153	03/03/2026	Pension contribution	Nest Pensions	X	607.89		607.89
184	12/03/2026	Phone and Broadband charges	Talk Mobile	S	4.12	0.83	4.95
182	13/03/2026	Bank charges	Handelsbanken	X	12.40		12.40
185	19/03/2026	Printing	Miss H Penney	X	6.00		6.00
162	19/03/2026	Hall Hire	Farningham Village Hall	X	37.50		37.50
181	19/03/2026	Farningham Woods	Sevenoaks District Council	S	202.43	40.49	242.92
179	19/03/2026	Hall Hire	Farningham Village Hall	X	71.00		71.00
180	19/03/2026	Family Fun Day	Farningham Village Hall	X	169.50		169.50
185	19/03/2026	Printing	Miss H Penney	X	6.00		6.00
186	19/03/2026	Streetlight maintenance	Streetlights	S	155.00	31.00	186.00
187	19/03/2026	Neighbourhood Plan	TasteTurkey Ltd	X	379.80		379.80
188	19/03/2026	Tax/NI	HM Revenue and Customs	X	183.34		183.34
183	23/03/2026	Electricity supply	npower	L	377.77	18.89	396.66
189	24/03/2026	Pension contribution	Nest Pensions	X	171.99		171.99
175	27/03/2026	Clerk's salary	Miss H Penney	X	1,173.62		1,173.62
149	27/03/2026	Neighbourhood Plan	Tibbalds Ltd	S	1,573.71	314.74	1,888.45
149	27/03/2026	Neighbourhood Plan	Tibbalds Ltd	S	381.29	76.26	457.55
			Total		5,513.36	482.21	5,995.57

Receipts

Farningham Parish Council RECEIPTS LIST

Voucher	Date	Bank	Description	VAT Type	Net	Total
28	09/03/2026	FPC Current Account (HB)	Neighbourhood Plan	X	910.85	910.85
29	12/03/2026	FPC Current Account (HB)	Neighbourhood Plan	X	183.93	183.93
30	12/03/2026	FPC Current Account (HB)	Neighbourhood Plan	X	287.50	287.50
31	31/03/2026	FPC Deposit (HB)	Bank Interest	X	22.32	22.32
			Total		1,404.60	1,404.60

Items Payable

**Farningham Parish Council
PAYMENTS (AWAITING AUTHORISATION) LIST**

Voucher	Method	Date	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
1	BACs	08/04/2026	Insurance Renewal	Clear Councils	X	2,485.06		2,485.06
14	BACs	08/04/2026	Printing	Aspect Press	S	212.00	42.40	254.40
15	BACs	08/04/2026	Printing	Aspect Press	S	160.00	32.00	192.00
								446.40
5	BACs	08/04/2026	KALC Subscription	KALC	S	667.19	133.44	800.63
2	BACs	08/04/2026	KALC course	KALC	S	40.00	8.00	48.00
3	BACs	08/04/2026	KALC course	KALC	S	50.00	10.00	60.00
4	BACs	08/04/2026	KALC course	KALC	S	70.00	14.00	84.00
6	BACs	08/04/2026	Membership SLCC	SLCC	X	200.00		200.00
9	BACs	08/04/2026	HMRC	HMRC	X	183.34		183.34
13	BACs	08/04/2026	Printing	Miss H Penney	X	6.00		6.00
13	BACs	08/04/2026	Printing	Miss H Penney	X	6.00		6.00
								12.00
12	DD	08/04/2026	Phone & Broadband charges	Talk Mobile	S	4.12	0.83	4.95
7	DD	08/04/2026	Bank charges	Handelsbanken	X			
8	SO	08/04/2026	Clerk's salary	Miss H Penney	X	1,173.62		1,173.62
10	DD	08/04/2026	Pension contribution	Nest Pensions	X	171.99		171.99
11	DD	08/04/2026	Electricity supply	npower	L			
				Total		5,429.32	240.67	5,669.99

Appendix 1

Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley

Marc Logen | County Councillor | Reform UK

March 2026 Report

KCC Budget 2026-27

The KCC budget for 2026-27 was approved at Full Council on 12th February. The council tax increase is 3.99% - below the 5% anticipated when Reform took office in May 2025. For a Band D household, this is approximately £67.47 per year.

Since May 2025, KCC has delivered £100 million in savings and efficiencies. The breakdown by department is as follows.

Adult Social Care & Health - £41.7m

- Increased client income from annual uplifted contributions
- Greater use of tech-enabled care and equipment-based solutions
- Efficiencies in enablement, supported living, and community-based services
- Successful care package reviews for older people and younger adults

Children, Young People & Education - £21.2m

- Reduced home-to-school transport spend through re-procurement and route optimisation
- Early Help funded via the Children & Families Prevention Grant instead of core budget
- Holding vacancies in social work and support roles
- Lower legal services use
- Increased uptake of Personal Transport Budgets reducing hired transport demand

Growth, Environment & Transport - £17.9m

- Stronger income from Libraries, Registration & Archives
- Waste savings from higher recycling rates and reduced disposal tonnage
- Additional income from Highways fees, permits, and enforcement
- Smaller operational efficiencies across waste and environment services

Chief Executive's Department - £6m

- Property rationalisation
- Reductions in legacy pension liabilities
- Reduced discretionary spend across support services

Deputy Chief Executive's Department - £9m

- Reduced temporary posts and held vacancies
- Lower Member travel, allowances and appeals spend
- Closure of an underperforming Gateway site
- Higher uptake of salary-sacrifice schemes reducing employer NI costs
- Capital receipts used to fund eligible transformation costs

Non-Attributable & Corporate Budgets - £3.8m

- Lower debt repayment costs following loan restructuring
- Increased Commercial Services dividend
- Reduced agency staffing across the organisation

KCC has also reduced debt by £67 million from a starting position of over £700 million, with interest costs falling accordingly.

Full budget details: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budget/our-budget>

Drainage: Gullies and Ditches - Who Is Responsible?

A blocked drain near Styant's Bottom/Watery Lane in Seal (ref: 953274) has prompted a question that affects residents across the division: what is the difference between a gully and a ditch, and who is responsible for clearing each?

A gully is the drain with a grid on top that sits within the road surface and collects water from the carriageway. Gullies are KCC's responsibility. They are cleaned on a cyclical programme - typically every two years - and can be reported for reactive maintenance at kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults.

A ditch is a long, narrow trench usually running adjacent to the road. Most ditches are the responsibility of the adjacent landowner - known as riparian ownership. KCC owns and maintains a small number of ditches in Kent, but in most cases, if a ditch is blocked, it is the neighbouring landowner who is legally obliged to clear it.

The distinction matters because residents often report what they believe to be a KCC drainage issue, only to find that responsibility lies with a private landowner. If in doubt, please report to KCC at kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults, and they will identify ownership.

Illegal Migration Emergency Declared for Kent

At the Full Council meeting on 19th March, KCC passed a motion - the first of its kind by any county council - declaring an Illegal Migration Emergency in Kent.

Kent is the frontier county for small boat arrivals. Between 2018 and 2025, 194,000 people arrived via this route. In 2025 alone, 41,500 crossings were detected - a 13% increase on the previous year. In the first three months of 2026, 3,400 people have already arrived. The vast majority cross from France, a safe country, and most are unvetted adult males.

The financial cost is not abstract. Based on KCC's estimates of £7 billion per year in illegal migration costs nationally, Kent residents' share is approximately £151 million per year - around £368 annually for a Kent family of four. When migrant welfare costs of £10 billion per year nationally are added on a pro-rata basis, the total cost to Kent households is approaching £600 per household per year. These are conservative estimates; the real figures are likely higher given Kent's tax base.

The pressure on KCC directly is significant. KCC has a statutory duty to house and care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Government funding covers costs up to age 18, reduces between 18 and 21, and stops entirely for 21 to 25 year olds - leaving KCC statutorily obliged to fund housing, food, clothing and care for that age group from its own budget (taxpayer funded). Ten centres have been established across the county at a combined market value of approximately £20 million.

The declaration calls on the Leader of KCC to demand the Government stops small boat arrivals immediately; to secure full government funding for the costs to KCC and partner agencies; and to ensure Kent's emergency services and resilience structures are properly funded to deal with the ongoing crisis.

This declaration is a first step. It puts Kent's specific needs on record, increases pressure on central government, and provides a foundation for further action. The current situation is unsustainable and the cost is being borne disproportionately by Kent residents and taxpayers.

The full motion is available here:

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s136152/1.%20Reform%20UK%20Group%20-%20Illegal%20Migration%20Emergency.pdf>

Questions & How to Get in Touch?

I represent 9 communities and produce this monthly update for all parishes/associations in the ward. If you have issues where county-level involvement could help - highways, planning, drainage, funding, or anything else that touches KCC - please get in touch. The more I know about what is happening on the ground, the more effectively I can act.

I also receive many requests for help directly from local residents. Where the matter is relevant to the parish, I will keep the clerk informed.

Email and Teams: marc.logen@kent.gov.uk - or arrange a Microsoft Teams call for anything that needs more discussion. If something is urgent, email directly rather than waiting for a meeting.

Parish meeting attendance: I plan to attend each parish in person at least once per quarter. If you would like me at a specific meeting, email me directly.

Marc Logen

County Councillor for Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley

Kent County Council | Reform UK

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