

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Minutes

22 April 2026, 6:30 to 8pm the Shand Hall, Farningham



1. Welcome, introductions and apologies.

Steering Group (SG) Members:

Liz Bourne, Su Hewitt, Mark Hopkins, Helen Penney and Janice Williams.

Supporting and interested residents in attendance:

Jacky and Lynn and two residents - Lisa and Peter, wishing to observe the meeting and learn about the NP.

Apologies:

Kevin McGeough.

2. Review of project plan including walk analysis.

Liz had circulated a more detailed analysis of the responses collated from the Discovery Walks to Tibbalds and Steering members prior to the meeting, split into three sections; green spaces, built form and village life. There were no additional comments on it.

Everyone agreed that points to cover with Tibbalds that Friday were the three emerging policies, the project plan and structure, Local Green Spaces, Site Allocations, housing needs assessments, special views and next steps.

A charter for the village was also discussed.

3. Questions to ask Sevenoaks and/or Tibbalds.

Questions for SDC to be determined after the meeting with Tibbalds.

4. Events – to agree next steps for events and allocation of tasks if necessary. Check list at end of agenda if required.

a. Annual Parish meeting, Monday 11 May, 7 to 9pm

Kevin to present a short report on the plan and a stall to be set up.

b. Village fete/summer fayre, Saturday 13 June

A table to promote the NP and for engagement and fundraising to be agreed between the Events Committee and fete organisers.

c. Saturday 4 July – Elvis night

Tickets are selling well. Su to ask her contact is a higher resolution poster can be produced to advertise in the village.

d. Family Fun Day, 29 July.

Helen will attend and anyone else can join on the day.

e. 12 September 2026, Village Hall.

Potentially a quiz night. Events Committee to progress.

f. Christmas carols 5 December 2026.

To be discussed nearer the time.

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5. Finance Update.

No update due to annual leave.

6. Reminders.

a. Website – Any changes or updates required to the webpage

Helen has added engagement material to the website.

b. Trident Report – Do we want one and who will write it? Deadline 11 May.

Liz can prepare something after the meeting with Tibbalds.

7. Any other business.

Helen has received an email regarding the Darent Valley Railway Partnership for the Parish Council to consider at their next meeting. Helen and Liz will raise with the Steering Group if it is something that could help support the NP.

8. Upcoming dates. Shand Hall, 6:30 to 8pm unless otherwise specified:

- Mon 15 May - Annual Parish Meeting, Farningham VH, 7 to 9pm
- Wed 27 May - SG meeting, [note: subsequently agreed to be a drop-in session for businesses and local groups]
- Sat 13 Jun - Village Fete, Market Meadow (if the SG has a stall?)
- Wed 24 Jun - SG meeting
- Sat 4 Jul - Elvis Night, Farningham VH (booked 6–11pm)
- Wed 22 Jul - SG meeting
- Wed 29 Jul - Family Fun Day, Market Meadow, 10:30 to 13:30.
- Wed 26 Aug - SG meeting
- Wed 23 Sep - SG meeting
- Wed 28 Oct - SG meeting
- Wed 25 Nov - SG meeting
- Dec TBC - SG meeting

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Skills Audit Checklist

1. Local Knowledge & Community

Good knowledge of the local area
Understanding of local issues and priorities
Links with local groups, organisations or residents
Experience of community engagement or consultation

2. Communication & Engagement

Clear written communication
Confident verbal communication
Public speaking / presentations
Social media or website content

3. Planning & Technical Understanding

Knowledge of planning processes
Ability to read planning documents and policies
Understanding of housing, transport, environment or heritage issues
Mapping or spatial awareness (reading plans, site locations)

4. Research & Evidence Gathering

Designing surveys/questionnaires
Analysing survey results/data
Researching policies, evidence or background information
Report writing

5. Organisation & Project Skills

Meeting organisation or administration
Minute-taking / record keeping
Action tracking and follow-up
Project management or coordination

6. IT & Digital Skills

Email and document management
Online surveys
Website updates
Basic data handling (spreadsheets)

7. Governance & Group Working

Chairing or facilitating meetings
Working as part of a team
Objective and impartial decision-making
Understanding of confidentiality and conflicts of interest