FINDERN PARISH COUNCIL
Clerk: Mrs Kate Sharpe
Findern Parish Rooms, Lower Green, Findern, Derbyshire DE65 6AS
Tel: 07444 085807

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Findern Parish Council held at the Methodist Church, Lower Green, Findern, DE65 6AD on Thursday, 12 March 2026 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors T Brown, Y Carty, B Dosanjh, J Hawke, C Smith, M Ratcliffe & M Woodhouse.

Also present: Kate Sharpe (Clerk) and seven members of the public.

3686/26 **Apologies for absence**
Apologies were **NOTED** from Councillors G Cooke and S Holmes.

3687/26 **Declaration of members interests**
None.

3688/26 **Public Speaking**

Members of the public:

- A resident read out a letter that had been sent to all residents of Brook Close from the Community Engagement Officers at SDDC. The letter stated that the Close was public highway and that there was no reserved parking for residents. The resident was concerned that people using businesses nearby would take up parking on Brook Close. The Clerk would write to SDDC to seek clarification on the content of the letter.
- A resident reported that there was a fallen tree in Doles Brook at the point where Priory Way commences. Also, there was chairs and other items in the brook between Priory Way and the small bridge over Common Piece Lane.
  The Clerk would contact the Local Flood Agency and / or the Environment Agency to report the issues.
- A resident asked whether there was any update on removing the litter around the A38 Roundabout. At the last Parish Council meeting, Councillor Ford reported that he had approached the District Council to ask for the litter to be cleared. It was reported that the Highways Agency would clear the slip roads only. The Clerk would contact Councillor Ford for an update.
- A resident asked whether the issue with blocks in the drains had been resolved. Councillor Smith confirmed that the blocks were still in there. The Clerk would contact Taylor Wimpey again to raise that there is still an issue and that no action had been taken.
- The Parish Warden reported that he had spoken to a contractor on Highfields who had advised they were being contracted to clear the ditches of the debris left there; they would be starting work soon.

Police Liaison Officer:
Councillor Brown read a summary of Police activity from Derbyshire Alerts

The South Derbyshire Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) Officer had not submitted a report to the meeting. Residents should note that the information about the work of the SNT can be found on the Mercia SNT Facebook page. Also, these are the many ways residents can report crimes or incidents, including: -

• Facebook – send a private message to the Derbyshire Constabulary Main Facebook page
• Twitter – direct message the contact centre via @DerPolContact
• Website – There are several crime reporting tools on the website or online contact form
• Phone – call the police on 101 for non-emergency matters.

District and County Councillor Reports:

Councillor Martyn Ford (District and County Councillor) was not present at the meeting; however, he had submitted the following report: -
District Council matters: -

- *Planning Enforcement have been engaged with an issue on Hillside. I have contacted Housing regarding erecting a gate across the entrance to the garage site. This has been refused as SDDC will be reviewing their garage sites prior to presenting a report to the relevant committee. The Clean Team had attended and cleaned up the detritus in the area.*
- *It has been reported that proposals for a new council depot to serve the district has been abandoned due to rising costs.*
- *Details of events across the district can be found on the SDDC website.*

County Council matters: -

- *Works have been undertaken on Buckford Lane to help alleviate flooding outside the Primary School, ditches have been cleared out and undergrowth cut back.*
- *Note parking outside the school at drop off and pick up is atrocious at times!*
- *The Gulley Cleaning team had visited Burton Road three times in recent weeks to clear highway flooding.*
- *I have reported potholes around The Green to DCC for repair.*
- *Council Tax at DCC has been determined at 4.9%.*

Councillor Ian Hudson (District Councillor) was present at the meeting, and gave the following report:

- *The planning Enforcement Officer at SDDC was considering closing the case regarding the play area and sports pitch at Highfields. Councillor Hudson advised the Parish Council that if they knew of any outstanding issues, then they should contact the Enforcement Officer for the case, to discuss any issues with them. Councillor Hudson said he would forward the contact details to the Clerk.*
- *Council Tax for SDDC had been set for a 2.99% increase; County Council a 4.9% increase; Police a 5.11% increase; and Derbyshire Fire Brigade, a £5 increase.*
  The District Council had been disappointed to receive only 112 responses to their consultation about Council Tax increases.
- *There is now a live consultation on the SDDC run Area Forums. Changes* proposed included: - less meetings; held online so that they were no longer local; no residents invited. *Councillor Hudson was keen for Findern Parish Council to complete this consultation. The deadline is 28 February 2026. Councillor Brown, as a regular attendee at Area Forums, should have received this consultation directly to her registered email address.*
- *Another consultation for the National Grid upgrade from Chesterfield to Willington had been launched. There were drop-in sessions at various dates and locations.*

3689/26 **Response to emails from residents**

a) Issues with the parking on Doles Lane adjacent to the Oldfield development
A resident had contacted the Council about the parking of vehicles opposite the entrance to the Oldfield Development. The parking of tradesman vehicles along the length of the road made it, in effect, a single lane road.

The Clerk had written to the developer suggesting some ways of alleviating the issue. There had been no reply. The Clerk had also written to the planning department at the District Council to request a copy of the construction site management plan that would have been submitted at planning stage. This would contain a plan for the management of construction vehicles. This would be circulated to Members once received.

3690/26 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 12 February 2026 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3691/26 **Variation of order of business**

None.

3692/26 **To determine which items, if any, of the Agenda should be taken with the press and public excluded**

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1, Members had **RESOLVED** that they would consider two items in Exempt: -

a) Matter regarding the Parish Rooms.

3693/26 **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman, Councillor T Brown gave the following report: -

Welcome to the March meeting of Findern Parish Council.

I would like to begin by saying that it is with great sadness that we acknowledge the passing of Councillor Hans Hettman on the 17 February 2026. Hans was a very active member of Findern Footpaths Group and always attended Parish Council meetings on their behalf. It was at a meeting that he decided to put himself forward to be a Councillor, and he joined the Council in July of 2023. He was passionate about the Highfields Estate, where he lived, and he was fully committed to ensuring that as a Parish Council we were as much invested in Highfields as in Findern Village. He also became a Community Speed Watch volunteer, and I could always depend on him doing a session every week. We will remember him as kind man, with a great sense of humour, who committed fully to every group he was involved in. We will all miss him and will remember him fondly. His funeral is on 27 March 2026 at the Trent Valley Crematorium on Derby Road, Aston on Trent at 1:30pm, followed by refreshments in Findern Village Hall.

The Speed Watch group have completed five sessions since the last Parish Council meeting. We recorded a total of 1,776 vehicles. There were 36 first letters, 0 second letters and 0 third letters sent. Only 2 people were local to Findern, and 0 vehicles could not be verified.
We have had a new volunteer who will be doing their on-line training soon, followed by their roadside training. If you would like to volunteer for Speed Watch, please contact the Parish Council as we are always looking for volunteers.

3694/26 **Report of the Parish Clerk**

a) Confirmation of Summer activity sessions
The two dates have been confirmed as 10 August 10am – 12noon Play Mobile session and 19 August 2pm-4pm Adventure Mobile session; these dates had been confirmed with Highfields Spencer Academy.

b) Website and email compliance
The workflow is in place, and all the new inboxes are set up ready to be connected to - the next step is to migrate the existing email over to those new accounts. Any emails sent to the previous .org addresses would be forwarded to the new accounts, so nothing would get lost.

c) Vacancy on Council
The Clerk had advised South Derbyshire District Council of the vacancy on the Council. They have issued the Notice of Vacancy, which was posted on all the Noticeboards on 9 March and would be displayed until 27 March. This notice invites anyone to request an election. If more than 10 people come forward asking for this, then there would be an election. If not, then on 30 March the Council could proceed to co-option.

d) Site meeting with Greenbelt representative & Ecology Officer
This meeting had been arranged for Thursday 19 March at 10am, meeting at the car park at Mackworth Avenue. Highfields Councillors Carty, Hawke and Smith plus the Chair and the Clerk would attend. Hopefully, this would be a positive meeting that raises some of the issues but also looks at what the Parish Council can do to help enhance the amenities and POS for residents at Highfields.

e) Work to replace posts on The Green
Stuart Reeves had reviewed his quote, and it had increased slightly but is still the most competitive at £1230.00 therefore, the work had been awarded to him. Posts and caps had arrived, and the Clerk had ordered eyes and new connectors for the chains, which should be delivered next week.

Unfortunately, the contractor who was going to install the benches, now cannot do the work; therefore, Stuart Reeves had been asked to install the benches, which he will do at the same time as doing the posts. He said he would do this for the same price as the other contractor which was £420.00. The old benches would be re-located to KGV.

f) Repair to Bus Shelter on Doles Lane
The bus shelter had a broken roof. Once this was confirmed as a Parish Council bus shelter, a quote was requested from Shelter Maintenance for repair. The quote was £256, as this was under £500, the Clerk had used delegated powers to approve this, and the repair work would be done asap.

g) Payment to All Saints Church for exterior lighting over the winter
As agreed with the Parish Council in the autumn, All Saints Church was lit up over the winter and the Council agreed to fund the additional hours for the low power LED lights. The Clerk had contacted the church and had been advised a payment of £150 would cover the cost for the additional lit hours. This would be paid in the new budget year, after 1 April 2026.

h) Flooding on Buckford Lane
The Jetter was on site during half term, and all ditches had been jetted and cleared.

i) Installation of new cesspit at Findern Primary School
No update received from school governors.

The report was **NOTED.**

3695/26 **Members Reports**

a) Findern in Relief Fund
Councillor Cooke was not present at this meeting and therefore there was no update available.

b) Stanhope Wood
The Chairman read out a report from Mike Barber, Chairman of Findern Footpaths Group.
The group have cleared away brambles and planted some Viburnum Opulus 'Roseum' (Snowball) trees that were kindly donated by Findern Parish Council. By clearing the brambles, we were able to choose a suitable spot where the trees will get full sun thus encouraging best flowering. We also cut back some of the overgrown lower tree canopies to open sunlight to the spring flowers. It was pleasing to see ground flora such as Cowslip and Primroses coming through in the Woods where we had previously cleared trees and opened the ground to more light. Upcoming plans for Stanhope will be to flail/strim through the woods to enable planting of more ground flora and sowing of wildflower seeds. We are appreciative and grateful for the funding and support from the Parish Council to enable the Footpaths Group to continue to develop and maintain this area.

c) Local / Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the Parish
The planning officer had contacted the Council about arrangements for the display of the NDP documents for the Regulation 16 consultation. The Regulation 16 consultation should take 6 - 7 weeks, and they have indicated the consultation would be around Easter. Following that there would be an independent examination of all the documents.

d) Warm Welcome
Warm Space continues to thrive. On the 3 March we had a total of 46 people, the highest number for a normal week. Councillor Ford and Officer Bob also attended a session to listen to residents' concerns and answer any questions. Officer Bob then came back a couple of weeks later with updates. We recently had a visit from a couple of ladies hoping to set something similar up in Repton so we are supporting them moving forward. Please feel free to pass the word, you do not need to live in the parish, and all are very welcome. We operate every Tuesday between 12-2pm at Findern Village Hall, offering a jacket potato, slice of cake and warm beverages. It is a free event, but donations are always welcome towards the costs.

e) Data from VAS Unit
The Clerk has had no reply from the contractor about moving the units. She will chase this. Councillor Woodhouse reported he has permission from the landowner for the Council to trim the trees to allow more light to the unit. Councillor Woodhouse said he would approach a tree surgeon to get a quote for the work.

f) Porters Lane development
Councillor Ratcliffe reported that the development was progressing well. The road condition was poor, and this would have to be repaired after all building work was completed. Clerk to contact Planning Enforcement to ask who manages this repair.

3696/26 **Matters for Discussion or Determination**

a) Community Governance Review: agree extent and consider petition for signatures
Councillors considered the extent of the Community Governance Review.

RESOLVED that it should be to increase the number of Councillors from 10 to 12.

b) SDDC Planning response on replacement windows at the Parish Rooms
This item was deferred as the Council had not had a response from SDDC planning on the query about the type of material for the windows.

c) Newsletter approval and distribution
Members considered the content of the Spring 26 newsletter.

RESOLVED to approve this for printing. Councillors agreed to help with the delivering of the newsletter to all households in the parish.

d) IT Policy approval
Members considered the IT Policy that had been drafted from the NALC template. This was required to comply with Assertion 10 of the 25/26 Annual Audit.

RESOLVED to adopt the IT Policy. The document would then be reviewed each year at the same time as all other policies and procedures; next review May 2027.

e) Council's Risk Assessment document approval
Members considered the Risk Assessment for the Council, which looks at all the main risks to the Council with recommendations on how to reduce risk.

RESOLVED to adopt the Risk Assessment for the Council, with an immediate review of processes to ensure the Council is reducing risk. The document would then be reviewed each year at the same time as all other policies and procedures; next review May 2027.

f) Asset Register approval
Members considered the Asset Register as of 31 March 2026.

RESOLVED to approve the Asset Register and this was duly signed by the Chairman.

g) DALC Subscription Renewal
Members considered the renewal of the annual subscription to Derbyshire Association of Local Council. They considered the basic and enhanced levels of subscription.

RESOLVED to renew the Council's subscription on the basic level.

h) Donation in memory of Councillor Hans Hettmann
The family of Councillor Hans Hettmann had requested that in lieu of flowers; a donation be made to Findern Footpaths Group. Councillor Hettmann had been a valued member of the Parish Council and of Findern Footpaths Group. Councillor Woodhouse kindly said he would donate a tree for Stanhope Wood to be planted in memory of Councillor Hettmann.

RESOLVED that a donation of £125 would be made to Findern Footpaths Group from the Chairman's allowance.

i) Easter Event for the Parish – Friday 3 April 11am – 1pm at Findern Village Hall
Members discussed arrangements for the Easter Event on 3 April. A puppet show had been booked at a cost of £90 and the Clerk would purchase chocolate eggs and craft materials for the other activities planned.

RESOLVED that Councillors Brown and Smith along with the Clerk could attend to run the event.

j) Party in the Park – 11 July 2026 6pm – 10.30pm

- Quotes for Security
  Members discussed quotes for security for the summer event. Members had decided that security personnel should be present during the event as well as overnight.

  RESOLVED to accept the quote from SK Training Ltd - £592.
- Discussion on type of marquee
  This item was deferred. More information needed for a decision to be made.

- Attendance at the event of Lagan Street Food
  The Clerk had spoken to Lagan and they were keen to attend the event with their street food offer. They would donate towards costs; also, they offered a meal for four people at the restaurant as a raffle prize if the Council were to go down that route.

  RESOLVED to confirm Lagan's attendance.

- Option of table football activity
  Members considered this activity as an additional entertainment at the summer event. However, the majority thought this was an unnecessary addition to the event.

  RESOLVED to not go ahead with activity.

k) Christmas event at Highfields – Derby Serenaders for entertainment
The Clerk had approached the Derby Serenaders for the Highfields Christmas event. They were available on the date at a cost of £200.

RESOLVED to book the Derby Serenaders for the event.

3697/26 **Planning Matters**

Members **NOTED** the following planning consultations and decisions: -

Consultations

- **Ref. No. DMPA/2026/0129 38, Burton Road, Findern**
  The erection of an outbuilding at 38 Burton Road, Findern

Decisions

None.

3698/26 **Finance**

a) Concurrent Function Claim
Members **NOTED** the Concurrent Function Grant Claim.

b) Members approved the following items for payment: -
Authorised BACS payments – Councillors T Brown and C Smith.

Cheque No./BACS	Payee and Description of service or goods	Nett	VAT	Gross
16/2 Multipay Corporate Card	Google Workspace charge for November £14.00 and December £8.12	£22.12	£0.00	£22.12
16/2 Multipay Corporate Card	Amazon EU Sarl Two padlocks to replace those on VAS	£46.78	£9.36	£56.14
16/2 Multipay Corporate Card	No Dog Waste A4 stickers for waster bins	£22.87	£4.62	£27.49

16/2 Multipay Corporate Card	Card monthly fee	£3.00	£0.00	£3.00
BACS UTB 19/02/2026	Kniftons Toilets Ltd – deposit payment for hire of toilets for summer event	£173.00	£34.60	£207.60
BACS UTB 19/02/2026	South Derbyshire CVS for NEST Pension contributions	£185.63	£0.00	£185.63
BACS UTB 28/02/2026	Bank Charges Unity Trust Bank	£6.00	£0.00	£6.00
BACS UTB 02/03/2026	Quarterly Payment to Sarah Pritchard at FIND as contribution towards cost of external lighting	£45.50	£0.00	£45.50
BACS UTB 03/03/2026	South Derbyshire CVS February Payroll	£1687.04	£0.00	£1687.04
BACS UTB 03/03/2026	South Derbyshire CVS for January Liability payments to HMRC	£306.23	£0.00	£306.23
BACS UTB 03/03/2026	Hahn Plastics – order of 46 Polymer posts for refurbishment of The Green	£1334.56	£266.91	£1601.47
BACS UTB 13/03/2026	Payment to Findern Methodist Chapel for Room Hire 11/9, 9/10, 13/11, 11/12, 13/01. 15/01, 12/02, 12/03	£192.00	£0.00	£192.00
BACS UTB 13/03/2026	Findern Village Hall – Hire of Main Hall for Easter 2026 event	£60.00	£0.00	£60.00
BACS UTB 13/03/2026	Viking Direct Stationery for Councillor Brown Inks tricolour and black	£46.73	£9.35	£56.08
BACS UTB 13/03/2026	Fox Ground Maintenance & Landscaping Ltd – Monthly Ground Maintenance for January	£460.76	£92.15	£552.91
BACS UTB 13/03/2026	South Derbyshire CVS for October and November Liability payments to HMRC	£633.60	£0.00	£633.60
BACS UTB 13/03/2026	SDDC – Monthly operational inspection & maintenance of play area at KGV February	£54.65	£10.93	£65.58
BACS UTB 13/03/2026	Clerk's expenses – WFH Allowance, Phone, Mileage, Postage, Zoom Subscription	£72.07	£2.80	£74.87
BACS UTB 13/03/2026	Clerk's reimbursement for purchase of Easter eggs, and craft materials for Easter Event	£55.56	£11.11	£66.67

c) Members noted Income received: -

Date of credit	From	Into Account	Amount
31/01/2025	Interest on Nat West Reserve Account	NAT West Reserve	£60.18
03/03/2026	Sarah Pritchard / Find Ltd. - Parish Rooms Rent	Unity Trust Bank	£378.00
04/03/2026	NEST Penson refund	Unity Trust Bank	£3.04

d) Bank Account Reconciliation Report/Budget Monitoring Reports
Members **NOTED** the Bank Account Reconciliation Report/Budget Monitoring Reports up to 28 February 2026 (including Current and Reserve Accounts Balances).

3699/26 **Correspondence** - The following items of correspondence were **NOTED.**

a) Chesterfield to Willington National Grid Upgrade consultation and newsletter – forwarded 3/3.
b) DALC March Newsletter – forwarded 4/3.

3700/26 **Reports from Councillors attending meetings of outside bodies**

Meeting with SDDC Officers regarding issues at Cemetery on Common Piece Lane
Present- Councillor Ratcliffe, Councillor Brown, Sue (a representative of Murrays Funeral home), Chris Worman MBE, the Parks, and Open Spaces Manager for SDDC and Joanne Abbassi, Cemetery Manager at SDDC.

Sue from Murrays explained how bad the flooding situation was at a recent funeral, mourners had struggled to get through the gate way, and it was impossible to carry the coffin, they had to use a trolley to wheel it to the grave side, the gravesides were also collapsing during the service. This made it very unsafe for all involved and made a sad situation worse for the family.

Chris explained that a new better-quality substrate had been put down to replace what had been there previously. This would enable hearses to pull into the cemetery but that unfortunately the water table had been so high recently this had not been possible. Also, that the newly tarmacked parking area in front of the gate could be contributing to the flooding. Though this had certainly improved the entrance to the cemetery; there was no drainage in place and hedges had been taken out.

Chris would ask their engineer to visit the site with a view to laying stone inside the entrance gate to create a wear pad that should at least enable a hearse to pull in. This could also help with drainage at the entrance.

Councillor Ratcliffe asked about the possibility of planting some trees, this could not happen until the next planting season and a lot of things need to be taken into consideration, the siting of future graves, the religion of the people buried in those graves (as certain religions don't like anything in the immediate area) and the roots of the trees interfering with any graves.

A further update will be provided once the engineer had been to access the site.

3701/26 **Date of next meeting(s)**

The next Meeting of the Parish Council would be an Ordinary Meeting held **at 7pm on Thursday, 9 April 2026** at the Methodist Church, Lower Green, Findern, DE65 6AD.

3702/26 **Exclusion of press and public**

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1, Members had **RESOLVED** that, because of the nature of the business about to be transacted it was advisable that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they were instructed to withdraw.

3703/26 **Exempt**

Members considered matters relating to: -

a) Parish Rooms.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm