



The Queen's Hall
High Street
Cuckfield
West Sussex
RH17 5EL

01444 454276

Noemi Ripert: Parish Clerk
clerk@cuckfield.gov.uk

**Minutes of the 41st Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
held at 7.30pm on Thursday 7th May 2026**

Present: Mr A Burton (Chairman), Mr P Ceccherini, Mrs A King, Mrs A Kyle, Mr S Oversby-Powell, Mr A Podmore, Mr A Sheldon, Mr A Symonds and Mrs J White

In attendance: Ms N Ripert (Clerk) & Mrs K West (Communications & Admin Officer)

Public Question Time: None

FC001 To elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman

Cllr Burton presided for this item. Nominations for the office of Chairman of the Council were called.

Cllr Symonds proposed and Cllr White seconded that Cllr Andrew Burton be nominated as Chairman. There being no further nominations, Cllr Burton was elected as Chairman to the Parish Council for the Council year 2026-27.

Nominations for the office of Vice Chairman were called. Cllr Burton proposed and Cllr King seconded that Cllr Martin Sheldon be nominated as Vice Chairman. There were no further nominations and Cllr Sheldon was duly elected as Vice Chairman to the Parish Council for the Council year 2026-27.

FC002 To receive Declarations of Acceptance of Office of Chairman and Vice Chairman or, if permitted by Council, before or at a later date fixed by the Council

Declarations of Acceptance of Office were signed in the presence of the Proper Officer at the meeting.

Cllr Burton then took the chair for the meeting and welcomed members to the forty-first annual meeting of Cuckfield Parish Council.

FC003 To receive apologies for absence

Cllr Dormer offered her apologies which were noted.

FC004 To receive notification of updated Councillors Register of Interests

Cllr Kyle notified the Council of an update to her Register of Interests. The Clerk was requested to notify the Monitoring Officer and submit the updated completed form accordingly. All other Councillors confirmed that there were no changes to their Registers of Interests.

FC005 To note the requirements of and resolve to adopt the Code of Conduct

Requirements of the Code of Conduct were duly noted and adopted.

FC006 To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of any matter on the agenda. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest. If you become aware, during the meeting, of an interest that has not been disclosed under this item you must immediately disclose it

None.

FC007 To approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 2nd April 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd April 2026 were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.

FC008 To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meetings held on 26th March 2026, 27th March 2025 and 11th April 2024

The minutes of the Annual Parish meetings held on 26th March 2026, 27th March 2025 and 11th April 2024 were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.

FC009 To receive a verbal report from the Chairman

Cllr Burton welcomed all Councillors to Cuckfield Parish Council for the forthcoming and final year of the current Council term. Cllr Burton reported that the Cuckfield Society AGM had been held during the week, was very well attended, and had received strong support from the community. Cllr Burton thanked the Cuckfield Society for its hard work and engagement in supporting fundraising efforts towards the Cuckstye appeal campaign.

FC010 To note the Full Council Action List

The action items were noted.

FC011 To approve Bank Reconciliation Statements for March 2026 for Unity Trust, NS&I and CCLA

The bank reconciliation statements were reviewed, approved and signed.

FC012 To review the 2025-26 finances to 31st March 2026

Council reviewed and noted the budget for 2025-26.

FC013 To review and (re)adopt Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Council reviewed and resolved to re-adopt the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

FC014 To consider a review of the standing committees for the Year 2026-27, appoint and review their terms of reference and delegation of functions, receive nominations for membership of committees and consider the appointment of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the committees:

a. Assets, Community & Environment

Cllr Symonds was nominated by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Sheldon as Chairman.
Cllr Podmore was nominated by Cllr Symonds and seconded by Cllr Kyle as Vice Chairman.
Cllrs Ceccherini, Dormer, Kyle, and White were additional members.

b. Community Buildings

Cllr King was nominated by Cllr Symonds and seconded by Cllr White as Chairman.
Cllr Symonds was nominated by Cllr King and seconded by Cllr Oversby-Powell as Vice Chairman.
Cllrs Oversby-Powell and White were additional members.

c. Planning

Cllr Oversby-Powell was nominated by Cllr Podmore and seconded by Cllr King as Chairman.
Cllr Dormer was nominated by Cllr Oversby-Powell and seconded by Cllr Kyle as Vice Chairman.
Cllrs King, Kyle, Podmore and White were additional members.

d. Roads & Traffic

Cllr White was nominated by Cllr Kyle seconded by Cllr King as Chairman.
Cllr Kyle was nominated by Cllr Ceccherini and seconded by Cllr Oversby-Powell as Vice Chairman.
Cllrs Ceccherini, King, and Oversby-Powell were additional members.

e. Human Resources

Cllr Burton was nominated by Cllr King and seconded by Cllr Sheldon as Chairman.
Cllr Sheldon was nominated by Cllr Burton and seconded by Cllr Kyle as Vice Chairman.
Cllrs King, and Kyle were additional members.

f. Finance & General Purposes

Cllr Sheldon was nominated by Cllr Oversby-Powell and seconded by Cllr Symonds as Chairman.
Cllr Symonds was nominated by Cllr King and seconded by Cllr Kyle as Vice Chairman.

Cllrs King, Oversby-Powell and White were additional members.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman were ex-officio members of all committees.

The Clerk would prepare and circulate a Committees list and the terms of reference to all Members.

FC015 To consider the Working Groups required for 2026-27 and confirm membership:

- a. **Cuckfield Village Hall Redevelopment**
Council agreed to close this working group
- b. **Neighbourhood Plan**
On hold until the District Plan was complete
- c. **Biodiversity Action Plan**
Cllrs Podmore & Dormer
- d. **Any other working groups**
Cllrs Kyle, King and White agreed to form the Policy Working Group to review all the CPC policies.

FC016 To appoint representatives to and agree arrangements for reporting back from:

- a. **West Sussex Association of Local Councils**
Cllrs Burton & Sheldon
- b. **Cuckfield Museum Trust**
Cllrs King & Symonds
- c. **Blunts Wood Steering Committee**
Cllr Podmore
- d. **Emergency Planning Liaison Group**
Cllr Symonds
- e. **Neighbourhood Watch**
Cllr White
- f. **Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils**
Cllr Sheldon & White
- g. **Town & Parish Strategic Liaison Group**
Cllr Domer & Parish Clerk
- h. **Speedwatch**
Cllr White
- i. **PCC**
Cllr Sheldon & White

FC017 To review and agree authorised signatories on the Council's bank accounts (currently Cllrs Burton, King, Podmore, Sheldon and White)

Council resolved to retain existing signatories.

FC018 To reconfirm eligibility and approve the continued use of the General Power of Competence (GPC). The Criteria for the GPC as defined in S8 of the Localism Act 2011 (having an appropriately qualified Clerk and at least two thirds of the Council being elected) is met by the Council

The Clerk confirmed that the Council still met the criteria for the GPC as defined in S8 of the Localism Act 2011 (having an appropriately qualified Clerk and at least two thirds of the Council being elected), and Council noted the continued adoption of the General Power of Competence.

FC019 To approve the continuation of the following arrangements:

- a. **current scheme of delegation to committees, staff and other local authorities in line with legislation, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation**
- b. **ongoing partnership (including legal arrangements) with other local authorities, not**

for profit bodies and businesses

c. ongoing direct debits and annual continual contracts and agreements

Council noted existing arrangements had not changed and resolved they should continue.

FC020 To note the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2026-27

Council noted the instruction of Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd for 2026-27 and 2027-28.

FC021 To review and confirm arrangements for the following items (copies available in the Parish Office):

a. Inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment

b. Insurance arrangements in respect of all insured risks

Council reviewed and resolved to accept all arrangements in place for the above items. The Clerk advised that new purchases had been added to the fixed assets list, and old items decommissioned.

FC022 To note and approve the effectiveness of the Audit Plan and the Council's Internal Audit and Internal Control Procedures

Council noted and approved the effectiveness of the Audit Plan and the Council's Internal Audit and Internal Control Procedures.

FC023 To consider whether to produce the 2027 Cuckfield Parish Council calendar

Council agreed to produce the 2027 Cuckfield Parish Council calendar and proposed a bigger format (A3) to allow additional space for writing.

FC024 To review and agree the previously submitted quote for the High Street Christmas lighting scheme for 2026 and onwards

Council agreed to proceed with the quote for the High Street Christmas lighting scheme.

FC025 To receive an update on the proposed Cuckstye development and to note the costs associated with the professional advice received for the appeal

Cllr Burton confirmed that the Statement of Case had been prepared and that the appeal process was due to commence on 9th June. Cllr Burton encouraged all those able to attend to support the proceedings. A landscape expert had been instructed to assist with the case. It was also reported that legal fees had been reduced considerably through the appointment of a more junior legal adviser, and that donations continued to be received in support of the appeal.

Council agreed to the costs associated with the professional advice received.

FC026 Confidential Business: To consider whether to resolve to exclude the press, broadcast media and public (pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) during +consideration of the following confidential business to be conducted.

a) Council assets

Council noted that Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) had been proposed and that a letter had been sent to HM Land Registry requesting that all matters be referred to the First-tier Tribunal for determination. Council further noted that, should ADR be agreed, an independent surveyor would be appointed.

FC027 To note items arising after the preparation of this Agenda which the Chairman agrees to take as urgent. Such matters will be for noting only or deferral to a future meeting only
None

Meeting closed at 9.03pm

Signed _____

Future Meeting: 11th June 2026