FAIR OAK & HORTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL
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Minutes of the Council Meeting
Held On Monday 14 September 2026 at 6.00 pm
at The Parish Office, 2 Knowle Park Lane, Fair Oak

PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllrs Broomfield, Couldrey (Chair), Forfar, Marsh, Meech, Smith, Stupple

Officers: Andy Lowe - Executive Officer, Jo Cahill – Finance Officer, Michelle Leadbitter-Allen - Deputy Executive Officer

APOLOGIES

Cllrs Anderson, Barrett, Bird, Douglas, Higby, Tennent

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received at the meeting.

61. MINUTES OF MEETING

Cllrs reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting.

RESOLVED:

a) That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 29 July 2026 be signed by the Chair as a correct record; and

b) That the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 28 July 2026 be noted;

c) That the delegated planning decisions for week ending 14 August be noted.

62. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A representative from Eastleigh Borough Council was present to deliver an update on Tree and Bee Public Art provision to members. There was also a member of the public present to observe the meeting.

63. PUBLIC ART PRESENTATION

Members received a presentation from Vicki Fear of Eastleigh Borough Council on the public art project, and revised proposals following the comments from Council Meeting in July 2026.

It was noted that the bug bench at Upper Barn Copse had previously been approved and required no further consideration. Members considered the proposed sculptural reeds, pollinator sculptures and bee-wing feature, and supported the associated biodiversity benefits and the inclusion of interpretation signage and QR codes explaining the link to the Bee and Tree Corridor project.

Members considered the proposed location of the bee-wing sculpture at the junction of Fair Oak Road and Eastleigh Road. Concerns were raised regarding the suitability of the site and possible driver distraction. The proposal was supported, subject to confirmation from the relevant highway authority that the location presented no road safety concerns.

Members emphasised that publicity should make clear that the project was funded through developer contributions.

RESOLVED:

a) That the proposed group of three sculptural reeds at Dean Road Green Space and a further one sculptural reed at Horton Heath Community Centre be approved;

b) That the installation of the bee-wing sculpture at the junction of Fair Oak Road and Eastleigh Road be approved, subject to confirmation from Hampshire Highways that the proposed location presented no road safety concerns;

c) That interpretation signage and QR codes be included within the project; and

d) That officers continue to work with Eastleigh Borough Council to deliver the approved public art installations.

During discussion of the Tree and Bee Corridor public art proposals, Councillors highlighted the importance of artwork that is both attractive and practical. Members cited the shade structures at Fleming Park as a positive example and suggested exploring similar shade provision at the Splashpad, where additional cover would be beneficial.

Action: Executive Officer to investigate potential shade provision for the Splashpad area.

64. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reported that a casual vacancy had arisen following the departure of Cllr Chivuchi. The statutory notice of vacancy had been published, and confirmation was awaited from Eastleigh Borough Council as to whether a by-election had been requested. If no by-election had been requested, the vacancy would be advertised for co-option from 23 September 2026, with an appointment to be considered by the Council at its October 2026 meeting.

65. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S UPDATE

Members noted that there was no substantive update regarding Local Government Reorganisation at the present time

The Council noted that the Operations Team had successfully maintained the majority of the Parish hanging baskets throughout the summer and had now transitioned to autumn and winter duties, including hedge maintenance, grass cutting and seasonal sports pitch preparations.

Members noted the successful completion of the Cemetery Path project and received an update on the ongoing Knowle Park Masterplan, New Century Park path resurfacing works and the proposed refurbishment of the Knowle Park Skate Park.

The Council further noted that a number of community engagement activities had taken place throughout the summer, including volunteer sessions at Knowle Park, biodiversity monitoring activities and bat walks. Councillors were also reminded that the Parish Community Grants Scheme remained open for applications.

Members were advised that the Men's First Team of Fair Oak Cricket Club had secured promotion following a successful season. The outgoing Chair of Fair Oak Cricket Club had written to the Parish Council to express appreciation for the longstanding partnership between the Club and the Council and to thank councillors and officers for their continued support. The Executive Officer noted that the achievement reflected the strong working relationship between the organisations and the high standard of grounds maintenance delivered by the Operations Team.

The Chairman recorded the Council's congratulations to Fair Oak Cricket Club on its promotion and thanked the Operations Officer and Operations Team for their continued support of Parish facilities and events, including their assistance with the Community Library’s fith anniversary celebrations.

66. FINANCE REPORT

The Council considered the report of the Finance Officer.

RESOLVED:

a) That the contents of the report be noted; and

b) That the BACS payments be approved.

Action: Responsible Finance Officer

67. CONCLUSION OF AUDIT

The Finance Officer reported that the external auditor had noted that the independence of the internal auditor appointment should be formally recorded in the Full Council minutes when appointed.

RESOLVED:

That the Conclusion of Audit be noted.

68. PLANNING APPLICATION

The Council considered Hampshire County Council’s planning application for the creation of an external play area and the installation of a replacement modular classroom on an area of grass used

for informal play at Fair Oak Junior School, within the wider Wyvern Technology College site on Botley Road.

RESOLVED:

That the planning application be supported.

Action: Deputy Executive Officer

69. STREET NAME PROPOSAL FOR KNOWLE LANE DEVELOPMENT

Members considered the street naming consultation received from Eastleigh Borough Council for the Knowle Lane development and the proposed names **Woodland View** and **Woodland Barns**.

RESOLVED:

That Eastleigh Borough Council be advised that the Parish Council chose the name **Woodland Barns** from the available options.

Action: Executive Officer

70. EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK REVIEW

Members considered the recommended amendments to the Employee Handbook, proposed by the Council's HR consultant to reflect changes in employment legislation.

RESOLVED:

That the changes to the Employee Handbook be noted.

Action: Deputy Executive Officer

71. CEMETERY RULES, REGULATIONS & FEE REVIEW

Members considered the recommended amendments to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations and it was;

RESOLVED:

a) That the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations and supporting application documents be approved, including the proposed 18-inch wedge-style or flat tablet memorial for cremated remains within an existing burial plot.

b) That the additional fees for direct or family-arranged interments set out in the report be approved and added to the Fees and Charges Register for annual review.

c) That, in exceptional circumstances, an interment after 12 noon on a Saturday be permitted at officer discretion, subject to contractor availability.

d) That authority be delegated to the Deputy Executive Officer, as Cemeteries Officer, to implement the changes, finalise the documents, update the Fees and Charges Register and make minor non-substantive amendments before publication.

Action: Deputy Executive Officer

72. DATA PROTECTION COMPLAINT POLICY

Members considered the Data Protection Complaint Policy provided by Peninsula, the Council's HR consultants.

RESOLVED:

That the Data Protection Complaint Policy be approved, subject to replacing the Executive Officer's name with the job title.

Action: Deputy Executive Officer

73. AI POLICY

Members considered the proposed Artificial Intelligence Use Policy Addendum to the Information Technology Policy. The Deputy Executive Officer advised that, whilst the Council already had an Information Technology Policy, the increasing use of Microsoft 365 Copilot required a short addendum to define approved use, protect personal and confidential information, require human oversight and establish a clear governance and audit trail for AI-related risks.

The Deputy Executive Officer reported amendments requested by Councillor Bird. Members agreed that the policy should be amended to clarify that personal details must not be included in AI prompts unless expressly authorised by an appropriate officer. Where the use of personal data is considered necessary, prior approval must be obtained from one of the Council's Information Governance Leads. Members further noted that any inadvertent disclosure of personal data through the use of AI would be treated as a data breach and managed in accordance with the Council's GDPR breach reporting procedures.

Members also considered a request to amend the transparency statement to require a named officer to review, verify and approve AI-assisted content before use. Officers advised that assigning this responsibility to a specific named officer for every instance of AI use would be disproportionate and impractical. Members accepted the officer recommendation that assurance should instead be provided through staff training, individual responsibility for reviewing and checking AI-assisted work before use, and management oversight through escalation and spot checks where appropriate.

Members noted that only Microsoft 365 Copilot was approved for Council business and discussed the importance of exercising caution when using external AI platforms due to potential data protection and information governance risks.

RESOLVED:

a) That the Artificial Intelligence Use Policy be adopted as an addendum to the Information Technology Policy.

b) That the Deputy Executive Officer be authorised to make minor operational amendments where needed to reflect changes in legislation, guidance, Microsoft 365 functionality or Council working practices.

c) That the addendum be reviewed alongside the Information Technology Policy, or sooner if AI use, data protection requirements or cyber security risks change significantly, and

FURTHER RESOLVED:

d) That the policy be amended to state that personal details must not be included in AI prompts unless expressly authorised by an appropriate officer and, where personal data is considered necessary, prior approval must be obtained from one of the Council's Information Governance Leads.

e) That any inadvertent disclosure of personal data through the use of AI be treated as a data breach and managed in accordance with the Council's GDPR breach reporting procedures.

f) That the transparency statement be amended to require AI-assisted content to be reviewed, verified and approved before use, with assurance provided through staff training, individual responsibility, and management oversight through escalation and spot checks by the Council's Information Governance Leads where appropriate.

Action: Deputy Executive Officer

74. ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The councilors considered the revisions to the Accessibility Statement and

RESOLVED

That the amended Accessibility Statement be agreed

75. PRIVACY STATEMENT

The councilors considered the revisions to the Privacy Statement and

RESOLVED

That the amended Accessibility Statement be agreed

76. WORK PROGRAMME

The Council reviewed the Work Programme.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme be noted and

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That an item be added to October Full Council agenda to consider the maintenance of Lydia Alford's grave and discuss the appropriate recognition of her contribution during the Second World War.

Action: Executive Officer / Deputy Executive Officer

Add agenda item to October Full Council meeting

Meeting Closed: 7.10 pm

Signature: ..... Chair

Date: .....