

FEC MEETING MINUTES

21st October 2025

Minutes of the FEC meeting held on Tuesday 21st October 2025 in Four Elms Village Hall at 10.00 am.

Present: Councillor Angela Haydon (AH), Councillor Stephen Lark (SL), Rachael Turner (RT), Clerk & RFO

Apologies were received from Councillor Joanna Wade

Please refer to the Draft Budget Papers for 26-27 for more detailed breakdown.

- 25-26 Year to date and forecast – RT reported spend was on target, save for any unexpected expenditure, for the rest of the year. Therefore, 25k should be available as contingency to carry over. In addition, there are earmarked reserves of 9.3k for infrastructure projects, 8k in CIL monies and 9.5k in pond monies.

Subsequent to the meeting, the Clerk has added in 3-year forecasting to the budget plan.

- Proposed Budget for 26-27 – an increase in costs of 3% was assumed when preparing the budget for 26-27 and assuming grants and donations remained budgeted at 4k for the year the total budget would be 55k.

Given the amount of contingency held, and given the current economic climate, a minimal increase in Precept of £1,000 to increase the Precept request to £54k was proposed.

- Projects to include in the Budget:
 - Four Elms play area equipment for younger children. New equipment is likely to cost around 10k. This could come from earmarked reserves for Infrastructure Projects and CIL monies. Additional external funding sources to be sought by Clerk, including looking at Waitrose funding.
 - JW had mentioned Hever Village Hall may be seeking further funding for the new hall. As there is no further information available at this time a view would be taken once a request was submitted.
 - Parish survey – the costs for this would be minimal and would look to run this in house and is taken account of within budgeted administration costs.
- Risk Management – a draft Risk Management Matrix was circulated for FEC to review and feedback to RT. This will then be presented at the November HPC meeting for review and then proposed to be adopted at the January meeting.
- Banking – RT confirmed the transition from Nat West to Unity Trust Bank was underway.

- Bank Accounts – currently Unity Trust have set up 3 accounts; one main (current) account, one Pond Account and one reserves account. The cost of the current account is £6 per month which does not attract interest. RT proposed to have just one main (current) account with sufficient amount in to cover 3 months of running costs and set up two reserves account which attract some interest (currently 2.1%). So there would be a Reserve Pond Account and a Reserve HPC Account. Both of which would receive a small amount of interest. Monies would then be transferred into the main account as and when needed; from the Reserve HPC Account for all HPC spend and from the Pond Account for any specific pond related expenditure.

The change of accounts will generate further mandate forms which RT will arrange and will then confirm a transition date.

Clerk to confirm sign off process for payments. Draft process is as follows:

- Clerk sets up payment – likely to be twice a month to ensure invoices are paid within 30 days.
- Signatories notified.
- Invoices shared together with payments list for signatories to cross check.
- Two signatories sign off payments on line. In the event of only one signatory being available, the Clerk can be the second signatory.

Signatories are members of the FEC (Cllr Haydon, Cllr Lark and Cllr Wade) plus Cllr Roberts

- Financial Regulations – Clerk has updated these and created Draft Financial Regulations to be reviewed by FEC. These will be shared with full Council at the November meeting for review and then proposed to be adopted at the January meeting. The updated regulations are based on the NALC model and will help ensure ongoing compliance and best practice is followed.

Internal procedures will need to be modified to ensure compliance. Clerk to action.

- Clerk Appraisal – this was carried out, feedback given and RT was thanked for her contribution throughout the year.