

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Four Marks Parish Council
Held on 21st January 2026 at the Village Hall, at 7.00pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Cllrs Briggs, Smith, Davies, Gebbett, McAllister, Medhurst, M Pullen and R Pullen
STAFF:	Louise Steele, Locum Clerk
PUBLIC:	Five members of the public including District Councillor Neal Day; a further two members of the public joined at 7.13pm
APOLOGIES:	Cllr Coulson

26.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Coulson.

26.02 OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to enable a prolonged period of public participation which started with a presentation from Nick Stenning of the A31 Alliance. The slides from Mr Stenning’s presentation are appended to these minutes. Councillors and members of the public were invited to ask questions of Mr Stenning.

The Chairman permitted Cllr McAllister to raise a matter as though he were a member of the public. Cllr McAllister said “as we have failed to get anywhere with highways and the developers proposals do not meet our requirements I suggest we add an item to next full council agenda to propose that we employ traffic consultants to prepare drawings and traffic calculations for road junctions on A31 layout oak green and alterations to bridges (two way traffic and separate cycling pedestrian access). The Neighbourhood Plan should manage the process on behalf of both councils and it should be jointly funded from Neighbourhood CIL. If it is agreed to add agenda item then the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will vet possible consultants and get budgetary costings for the next council meeting.

It was understood that members of the public present were interested in Agenda Item 14 – Correspondence and the Chairman indicated that he would bring this item forward.

26.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No councillor made any declaration of interest.

26.04 FULL COUNCIL MINUTES

Upon the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, seconded by Cllr Davies, and with all Councillors in agreement it was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Meeting of Council held on Wednesday 19th November 2025 and upon the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, seconded by Cllr Davies, and with all Councillors in agreement it was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 17th December 2025.

26.05 CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

Cllr Briggs indicated that he had nothing to report.

26.06 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

District Councillor Day reported upon the uncertainty surrounding Local Government Reorganisation – while reorganisation will go ahead as planned it now looks possible that there may be County Council elections in May – these would be difficult to arrange at short notice.

26.07 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

26.07.1 The draft minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 12 January 2026 were received.

26.08 BUDGET 2026-27 AND PRECEPT 2026-27

26.08.1 Budget for the financial year 2026/27 -Council considered the budget for 2026/27 as recommended by the Finance & General and upon the proposal of Cllr Briggs, seconded by Cllr Davies and with all Councillors in agreement it was RESOLVED to set the budget for the financial year 2026/27

26.08.2 Budget projections for the financial years 2027/28 & 2028/29 -Budget projections for the years 2027/28 and 2028/29 and the projected movement in reserves for the next three years were noted.

26.08.3 Precept for the financial year 2026/27 – Upon the proposal of Cllr Briggs, seconded by Cllr M Pullen and with all Councillors in agreement it was RESOLVED to set a precept of £233,450 for the financial year 2026/27.

26.08.4 Precept Requirement Form -Upon the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, seconded by Cllr Davies and with all Councillors in agreement it was RESOLVED to authorise the Chairman and the Clerk to sign the precept requirement form to be submitted to East Hants District Council.

26.09 PLANNING COMMITTEE

26.09.1 The draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 7 January 2026 were received.

26.09.2 EHDC-25-1351-HSE Ash House Wield Road, Medstead, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 5LY, Single-story rear extension to enlarge principal bedroom.

Comment: Not appropriate to comment on this application.

26.09.3 EHDC-25-1466-HSE Long Acre Alton Lane, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 5AJ The construction of an open front 2 bay oak framed carport with side logstore. This will be attached via a porch to the right side of the main property, set inside of the existing property. 4.7 meter ridge high. The rear of the carport roof will accommodate solar panels which will not be seen from the highway

Comment: Four Marks Parish Council has no objection and defers to the Planning Officer in the matter of this application.

26.09.4 Late Applications

EHDC-26-0044-HSE Lymington Cottage, 28 Lymington Bottom, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 5AH Erection of part single, part 2-storey extension to existing dwelling.

Comment: Four Marks Parish Council has no objection to this application.

EHDC-26-0021-EIA Land At Lymington Bottom Road, Four Marks , GU34 5EP Request for Screening Opinion - Residential development for up to around 900 dwellings in total, plus a new 2-form entry primary school, supporting infrastructure, access, drainage, public open space and landscaping. The total site area is approximately 45.48ha on 28-01-2026 15:35

Comment: Four Marks Parish Council is of the view that screening is required for the following reasons: Physical - Air quality will be affected by the sheer volume of extra cars. Many drainage bore holes are planned but this is in part a SPZ2 area. Assessment of flooding risk is required and of the adequacy (or otherwise) of sewage, water and energy infrastructure. Biological - a full ecology impact assessment is required. Human & Cultural Environment - A31 noise and pollution are issues as is a population increase with no proposed infrastructure other than an area allocated to a primary school when the main need will be for secondary school provision. Interactions & Cultural Impacts - there are 582 sites with permission since April 2024 and 259 sites awaiting determination. The total impact of all development on infrastructure needs assessment.

26.10 OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

26.10.1 The draft minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 7 January 2026 were received.

26.11 COMMUNITY FACILITIES COMMITTEE

26.11.1 The draft minutes of the Community Facilities Committee meeting held on 14 January 2026

were received.

26.11.2 It was agreed to appoint Cllr Smith to the Community Facilities Committee.

26.11.3 The Committee Chairman gave a brief update about the Benians Project.

26.12 FINANCIAL ITEMS.

26.12.1 The following reports for the Financial Year 2025/26 to 31 December 2025 were received:

- Expenditure against budget
- Balance Sheet
- Earmarked Reserves

26.12.2 To note bank balances at end of December 2025 and receive the Bank Reconciliations

The bank balances for the Unity Trust Bank accounts as at 31 December 25 were noted as follows:

- Current Account £6,044.82
- Instant Access £135,329.36

Completion of the bank reconciliations for December was noted.

26.12.3 To receive and approve the payments for December 2025.

Upon the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, seconded by Cllr Briggs and with all Councillors in agreement a schedule of payments for December 2025 totalling £22,259.33 was approved.

26.12.4 To review the bank mandate and agree instructions to the Unity Trust Bank

The Locum Clerk reported on the confusion that had followed attempts to implement Council's earlier decision to give Cllr R Pullen the ability to set up payments at Unity Trust Bank and that it was necessary to revisit the decision so that a recent signed minute can be provided to the bank

Upon the proposal of Cllr Briggs, seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councillors in agreement it was RESOLVED that Councillor Reginald Pullen should have View, Submit and Authorise (VSA) access to the Parish Council's accounts held at Unity Trust Bank

26.13 INFRASTRUCTURE BUSINESS PLAN

This item was deferred to the next meeting of Council.

26.14 CORRESPONDENCE

The Locum Clerk reported that subsequent to the public consultation sessions about the development of 850 homes at Lymington Bottom (Medstead) a letter had been received expressing concern about the development and a further seven emails had been received specifically requesting that a parish meeting be held and that Hampshire County Council (HCC) Highways be asked to attend that meeting to hear electors' views on, and answer questions about, the cumulative impact of development on highways.

The Locum Clerk clarified the law around parish meetings (Schedule 12 Part iii of the Local Government Act 1972) and advised that while six electors could convene a parish meeting the better way to proceed would be for the Parish Council Chairman to act on the requests received and to convene an extraordinary parish meeting. The Chairman indicated that he was minded to do so and the Locum Clerk was asked to approach HCC Highways to find a suitable date.

26.15 TO NOTE EXTERNAL COMMITTEE AND AREA REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

26.15.1 Allotments – the Locum Clerk reported that the AGM was to be held on 7 March 2026 – she would attend and seek consent for Cllr Davies to attend the meeting with her.

26.15.2 Benians Committee – Cllr Smith had nothing to report

26.15.3 Oak Green - Cllr Briggs reported that he and the Assistant Clerk were trying to sort out the fly tipped items.

26.15.4 Village Hall – Cllr Briggs had nothing to report

26.15.5 Highways – Cllrs R Pullen and Medhurst reported that County Councillor Kemp-Gee's attempts to have the abandoned car in the layby on the A31 near the BP garage removed were ongoing

Further that flooding at Five Lanes was an escalating problem

26.15.6 EHAPTC – Cllr R Pullen had nothing to report.

26.16 **Next meeting: 18th February 2026**

Meeting ended: 8.58 pm (there was a break in the meeting at 8.29 pm – the meeting reconvened at 8.38 pm with just one member of the public present when the meeting resumed).