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Minutes of the Full Council meeting held at Four Marks Village Hall on Wednesday 16th September 2026 at 7.00pm.

Members Present: Cllrs Briggs (Chairperson), Smith, R Pullen, M Pullen, Medhurst, Coulson, Gebbett, McAllister

In attendance: District Cllrs Richardson and Day (left at 8.14pm)
Jo Tsigarides, Clerk
Two members of the public

Apologies: Cllr Thomson

26.115 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Thomson sent apologies as she was representing the Council at a Highways workshop. The apologies were duly accepted by the Council.

26.116 OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

MP one enquired about deer warning signs on Lymington Bottom and the pothole at the entrance to the Oak Green parade car park. The Clerk informed them that the pothole works had been booked in. They then commented that in their capacity as a Councillor at Medstead Parish Council, when the duplicate Village Hall grant request was discussed, they were reclused as they had an interest in the item. The conclusion of the discussion was that Medstead PC would match fund the sum that the Village Hall Committee raised.

MP two enquired as to whether the Council was aware that there were two new yellow signs on Lymington Bottom promoting the Mount Royal development. They then referred to a statement issued by the Environmental Agency regarding water supply in the area and the possibility of a discussion with EHDC and/or Basingstoke and Dean Borough Council regarding the allocation of the two thousand two hundred homes cited in the document. Cllr McAllister advised that this would be discussed further in the Planning section of the meeting.

With no further items to add, the Open Session concluded at 7.07pm, and Standing Orders were applied.

26.117 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr R Pullen declared an interest in Agenda item 12.2 due to his affiliation with the Village Hall Committee.

26.118 FULL COUNCIL MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Smith, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Full Council meeting which was held on Wednesday 15th July 2026.**

26.119 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

26.220

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

DC Day provided an oral report noting:

- That the government re-organisation plan had been cancelled and elections for District and Parish Councils would take place in May 2027.
- There had been some progress on the clearance of the Laurel at the car park behind the shops at Oak Green. Contact would be made with EHDC's lead property surveyor on Thursday 17th September 2026.
- That there had been several incidents of graffiti in the village. The Parish Council was asked to highlight this on social media and report it where anyone is seen defacing street furniture.

26.221

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26.221.1

To receive the draft minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on the 2nd September 2026 and 5th August 2026.

The draft Minutes were received by the Council.

26.222

Planning applications for consideration:

26.222.1

Application Reference Number: EHDC-26-0044-HSE

Application Type: Householder

Application Proposal: Erection of part single, part two-storey extension to existing dwelling, together with alterations to the roof, insertion of rooflights within the side elevations and raising of the main ridge by 1m.

Application Location: LYMINGTON COTTAGE, 28 Lymington Bottom, Four Marks, Alton, GU34 5AH

Comment: Four Marks Parish Council does not object to this application and defers to the expertise of the Planning Officer.

26.222.2

Application Reference Number: EHDC-26-0919-OUT

Application Type: Outline Planning Permission

Application Proposal:

Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for means of access for up to 230 dwellings (Use Class C3), open space, landscaping, surface water drainage and associated infrastructure. Demolition of 67 Blackberry Lane for the provision of pedestrian and cycle access and emergency access

Application Location: NEW BARN FARM Alton Lane, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 5A

Comment: Four Marks Parish Council Strongly Objects to this application for two hundred and thirty dwellings, which exceeds the allocation in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for one hundred and seventy seven dwellings. It considers that the application is premature and does not demonstrate a joined-up approach to local infrastructure considering other applications in the nearby vicinity. The Council considers that there should be a clear connection between the developments and the service centre at Oak Green parade along with acceptable transport and traffic solutions.

The site proposes to use vehicle access directly from Alton Lane, but a preferred route would be through the proposed development at 87 Lymington Bottom (EHDC-25-0313-OUT). This would allow for the existing character of Alton Lane to be maintained.

Other considerations are the use of street lighting where it is not necessary for safety which contravenes the existing and emerging Neighbourhood Plan Dark Skies policy and the total site electricity demand appears to have been miscalculated at 3Kw per property. The utilities statement section 2.3.2 is extremely misleading and seeks to hide a serious electricity supply issue.

Alton bulk supply point (BSP) serves Primarily **GU30 to GU35** (encompassing Alton, Bordon, Liphook, Liss, and Petersfield) as well as sections of **GU8** (Waverley/Surrey border area) and parts of **RG21 to RG29** (Basingstoke area). It quotes a supply headroom of 18.47 MVA, which is very small considering the area covered, and fails to note that Alton BSP is constrained at both input 132kV and output, with mitigation work for a new 132kV feed not planned to be delivered until 2030. It quotes a load demand of circa 750kVA ; this is per house of 3.2kVA typical After Diversity Maximum Demand (ADMD) is 5-6kW giving a 1.38MVA ADMD. The figure quoted could not be achieved without a smart load balanced scheme (not mentioned and would mean no car charging in the early evening) and does not cover a cold start scenario for the ASHP's

The Council has concerns about a potential water shortage area in the village as a whole taking into consideration the cumulative effect of the developments. The Environment Agency report in application EHDC-25-0055-OUT gives guidance for planning based on 2200 homes but the Council is unclear on what portion of the cited 2200 homes within the WRZ4 zone are within Four Marks. The Clerk has written to EHDC for clarification.

In conclusion, there is a serious water, sewage and electricity supply issue to resolve. This application is premature and should be rejected until the Developer and adjacent site developers have produced an acceptable masterplan for the whole area addressing transport, connectivity, services and maintain the character of the existing village. The number of dwellings should also reflect the Neighbourhood Plan allocation.

26.222.3

Application Reference Number: EHDC-26-0909-FUL

Application Type: Full Planning Application

Application Proposal: Erection of detached house and repositioning of existing access

Application Location: LAND SOUTH OF 98 Telegraph Lane, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire

Comment: Four Marks Parish Council strongly objects to this application. It is considered that the site is unsuitable as there is no possibility of mains drainage, it is too far from the village centre, with no safe passage to amenities due to lack of footpath and therefore unsustainable.

According to the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment, there is not need for a large 298sqm home with four bedrooms. The site had a low score when the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were conducting the housing allocation due to the above issues.

Councillors were also very concerned about the location of the property on the plot. There appears to be a large access area at the side which could open up the potential for further development, and the Council considers this to be unacceptable. Should the Officer be minded to approve this application, there should be a condition that the dwelling should be more central to the plot to prevent further development behind.

26.223

OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

26.223.1

To receive the draft Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meetings held on 2nd September 2026 and 5th August 2026

The Minutes were noted.

26.223.2

To consider the new Climate, Nature and Biodiversity Policy for adoption.

There was some discussion about the tree planting requirement within the policy and it was agreed that it should be extended to all trees rather than just Ash trees in terms of the replanting commitment. Subject to that change, on the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Smith and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to adopt the Climate, Nature and Biodiversity Policy.**

26.223.3

To consider and approve the cost of a new flag pole and give instruction regarding Hampshire flag.

Councillors considered the cost of the flag pole which including a site visit and installation was quoted at circa £1000. It was decided that it would be more prudent to try and fix the current pole first and Cllr Briggs agreed to do this. On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Briggs, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to attempt to repair the flag pole and revisit the quotation if necessary.**

26.224

COMMUNITY FACILITIES COMMITTEE

26.224.1

To receive the draft Minutes of the Community Facilities Committee meeting held on 9th September 2026 and 19th August 2026.

The Minutes were noted.

26.224.2

To receive an update following initial meeting with the Employee Agent held on 4th September 2026.

Cllr McAllister provided an oral update of this meeting, and the notes had been circulated to the Council.

- 26.225 STAFFING MATTERS**
- 26.225.1 To appoint Locum Clerk as RFO as of 1st October 2026.**
On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Briggs and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to appoint the Locum Clerk, Debbie Batley, as RFO as of 1st October 2026.**
- 26.225.2 To reinstate Clerk as Proper Officer.**
On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to reinstate the Clerk, Jo Tsigarides, as the Proper Officer as of 1st October 2026.**
- 26.225.3 To consider moving items 10.4 and 10.5 into a Closed Session.**
On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Briggs and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to move items 10.4 and 10.5 into a Closed Session.**
- 26.226 FINANCIAL ITEMS**
- 26.226.1 To receive the following reports for the Financial Year 2026/2027 to 31st August 2026.**
- Expenditure against budget
 - Balance Sheet
 - Earmarked Reserves
- All reports were noted by the Council.
- 26.226.2 To note bank balances at end of August 2026 and receive the Bank Reconciliations**
Bank balances noted.
- 26.226.3 To receive and approve payments for August 2026 and September 2026 payments to date**
On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Briggs, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to approve the payments for July and August 2026 totalling £34973.94 and the September 2026 payments to date totalling £6370.25.**
- 26.226.4 To approve AGAR part 2 (Revised)**
The Clerk explained that there was an error in the original AGAR part 2 and on the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, seconded by Cllr Briggs and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to approve the amended AGAR part 2.**
- 26.226.5 To consider transferring funds from the Bus Shelter earmarked reserve into the general reserve.**
The Clerk explained that this transfer was intended to fund the graffiti cleaning, but it was noted by Cllr R Pullen that the earmarked reserve funds consisted of a grant payment for the new lights at the bus shelters which was awaiting invoice and so the item was deemed void.
- 26.226.6 To consider and approve insurance renewal premium.**
The Clerk noted that the preferential rate was £2391.95pa (v£2335.66 LY). On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, it was **RESOLVED to approve the insurance renewal quote.**
- 26.227 GRANT APPLICATION FOR DECISION**
- 26.227.1 Consider grant to Four Marks Flower Arranging Club**
The Clerk explained that Four Marks Flower Arranging Club had applied for a grant of £300 to help with the costs of a flower arranging demonstration. The Council currently has £355 left in the grant budget. Cllr R Pullen appraised the Council of the activities that the club undertaken and their excellent reputation locally.
On the proposal of Cllr Coulson, which was seconded by Cllr R Pullen, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to award Four Marks Flower arranging club £150.**
- 26.227.2 Consider grant application for Four Marks Village Hall (Commitment of Future CIL)**
It was agreed that Cllr R Pullen could remain for the discussion on this item after disclosing a prejudicial interest.

The Village Hall Committee had requested that the Council make a commitment of future CIL income to fund the various projects to improve the Village Hall. The Clerk noted that according to Minute 25.42.02, the Council had agreed to prioritise all CIL to the Benians improvement project. Cllr McAllister advised that the Council was not in a position to make any pledges of this kind.

On the proposal of Cllr Smith, which was seconded by Cllr Gebbett, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to decline the request from the Village Hall Committee requesting a commitment of future CIL funds.**

Cllr Pullen asked the Clerk to formally write to the Village Hall Committee to advise them of the decision.

26.228 ITEMS REQUESTED BY COUNCILLORS

26.228.1 To consider creating a working party for events.

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to form a Community Events Working Party comprising Cllrs R and M Pullen along with Cllr Medhurst.**

26.229 CLERK REPORT

26.229.1 To receive oral report including update on gaining planning permission from the Secretary of State for a potential Allotment path way.

The Clerk referred first to an item which had appeared on the Committee Agendas in on the 2nd September 2026 which had asked the Councillors to consider writing to the Secretary of State for permission to dispose of some Allotment land in order to make an accessible path through the side of the Allotments. This land would then be substituted with new Allotment land should the new development on Barn Lane go ahead. It had been established that the loss would be 300m² and the substitute land would be 2000m².

On making enquiries with the relevant department, some of the Council's questions were answered and it was established that the application could go ahead even if the substitute land was in an outline planning application and that the first step would be to consult with the National Allotment Society. A meeting is in the process of being set with the Four Marks Allotment Association first and the process will be followed from there.

The portfolio holder for Hampshire Highways had been contacted and invited to an Electors' meeting. They declined to attend but the County Councillor, Antonia Cox, had agreed to come. The meeting is provisionally booked for the 30th September 2026 at Four Marks Village Hall. Questions would be sent to the Councillor in advance. It was suggested that the Clerk should invite MP Damian Hinds.

The Clerk confirmed that the date of the village picnic had been confirmed as 13th June 2027, that the volunteer event was scheduled for Saturday 19th September 2026 where help would be needed to pack up swiftly, that the goal post grant had been approved and also that a factually incorrect article had been printed in the Alton Herald. When asked who their 'Council Spokesperson' was, the journalist had replied that no one had spoken to the paper and they had just taken the information from the website.

26.230 To note any correspondence

Alongside the circulated correspondence, the Clerk noted that there had been:

- An email from Dawn Adey, Chief Executive Officer, regarding the halt to the Government re-organisation.
- NALC Star Award Launch for Climate Change launch
- Various correspondence from Fight for Four Marks regarding a request for a formal EIA screening in the village and water supply issues (sent to Planning Committee)
- Correspondence from residents of Badger Close, which will be responded to in consultation with the Open Spaces Committee Chairman. A plan has been devised to organise urgent works, asking

for financial assistance and then devise an ongoing plan which can be built into the 2027/2028 budget. The initial works were being costed and Cllr R Pullen suggested that support should be sought from the District Councillors.

26.231 TO NOTE EXTERNAL COMMITTEE AND AREA REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS (as applicable)

26.231.1 Allotments –Cllr Thomson, not present. The Clerk advised that dates had been sent for a meeting to the Committee team and that water charges had been sent to them. Cllr R Pullen requested that they were asked for a full set of accounts.

26.231.2 Benians Committee – Cllr Smith . Nothing to report.

26.231.3 Oak Green - Cllr Briggs. The Clerk informed the Council that the contractor booked to repair the pot holes only had availability in early November 2026. Cllrs were dissatisfied with this and asked that a temporary fix was made by the contractor.

26.231.4 Village Hall – Cllr Briggs - Grant

26.231.5 Highways – Cllrs R Pullen and Medhurst. Nothing to report.

26.231.6 EHAPTC – Cllrs R Pullen. Nothing to report.

26.231.7 Four Marks Primary School. Cllr M Pullen was due to meet Mr Glew, the new headteacher, on the 17th September 2026.

23.232 **Next meeting 21st October 2026**

23.233 **Meeting Closed at 8.24pm**

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Council have the right to exclude the public and press from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest and may pass a resolution, without notice, to do so.

23.234 STAFFING MATTERS IN CLOSED SESSION

23.234.1 To note staff pay increases and backdated sums to April 2026

The Councillors were told about the national 3.3 percent pay increase for all staff, along with the backdated payment for each member of staff to April 2026. On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Smith and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED to approve the staff pay increases and the backdated amounts.**

23.234.2 To consider Locum Clerk hours and associated pay.

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED that the Locum Clerk would be contracted to fifteen hours on a temporary basis with an increment of one spinal column point.**

Signature:

Date: