



Ansdell & Fairhaven Parish Council

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at St Paul's Church Hall Ansdell & Fairhaven, Lake Road North, Fairhaven on Monday 24th August 2026 at 7pm.

Present: Councillor P Wilkinson in the Chair
Councillor J Frith-Williams (Vice-Chair)
Councillors M Morris, D Perkins, A Roe, E Taylor, and D Wilkinson.

Daniel Guise, Clerk & RFO
County Councillor John Singleton
Members of the Public: 8

72. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr P Spilsbury.

73. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

74. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Cllr Roe reported that Fairhaven Methodist Church were happy to have a parish council board located on their site. Cllr D Wilkinson asked to be kept up to date regarding this option.

Cllr Frith-Williams proposed that the minutes be approved. Cllr D Wilkinson seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th July 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

75. Declaration of Vacancy

The Chair made a statement to clarify the position regarding former Parish Councillor Susan Millar. He explained that Ms Millar had failed to attend any qualifying formal meeting of the Parish Council for a continuous period of six months. In accordance with the statutory provisions governing local authority members, Ms Millar ceased to be a parish councillor at the end of the six-month period.

The day before the six-month period ended, Ms Millar had sent an email to the Clerk attempting to submit her resignation as a parish councillor. However, the proper recipient of a resignation notice was the Chair of the council. The Chair reported that Ms Millar had not sent the email to him, and he had no knowledge of it until Ms Millar had already ceased to be a parish councillor due to non-attendance.

Cllr Frith-Williams reported that she and other councillors had worked with the Clerk on the chronology of the attempted resignation, and the statutory process whereby non-attendance results in a vacancy. She confirmed that, because the correspondence from Ms Millar had been sent to the Clerk, the attempt to resign had not been received in the correct manner prescribed by the law. Therefore, the resignation had never taken effect, and the six-month period had run its course with Ms Millar still in post. Cllr Frith-Williams advised that those councillors who do not attend a meeting for that length of time cease to be members of the council, and the council should declare a vacancy on this basis.

RESOLVED: that the Council declare that Susan Millar, having failed to attend a qualifying meeting for a period of six months, has ceased to be a member of the Council, and consequently a casual vacancy has arisen in Ansdell & Fairhaven ward.

76. Public Participation

A member of the public asked if the Council could look again at moving meetings to the Ansdell Library. They reported that the acoustics were better in the library, and it was more central to the parish. The Chair noted that the available space at the library was smaller, and Cllr D Wilkinson noted that it was not always available. There was a discussion of obtaining equipment to improve the audio situation at St Paul's Church Hall. Cllr Morris asked for costings to be obtained for a portable sound system, and it was noted that one which could make recordings would help with the production of minutes.

Another member of the public asked if there would be an election to fill the vacancy in Ansdell & Fairhaven ward. The Chair replied that it would depend on the public. Cllr Frith-Williams noted that 10 members of the public from the area would have to demand an election. In the absence of 10 such requests, no election would be held, and the vacancy would be filled by co-option.

County Cllr John Singleton asked for an update on the SPID installations and noted that there was no agenda item to cover it. Cllr P Wilkinson reported that the lead time on the devices had been stated, by the supplier, as 4 days, but it seemed more like 4 weeks. It was reported that the poles for the SPIDs were fully installed, and the council was simply waiting for delivery of the devices.

A member of the public asked if there was an update on a date for a surgery or meeting with residents. Cllr D Wilkinson replied that there were no dates at the moment, but it was still going ahead, and it would be advertised via the website and Facebook, once decided.

A resident raised the matter of planning application 26/0171 at 10 Audley Close. He had objected to the application in its original form, and he noted that the amended plans looked like an improvement. He reported that the balcony was smaller, the high wall had been removed from it, some screening had been added and there was a greater distance from the balcony to the garden boundary.

However, the resident advised that he would still object to the revised proposals. He commented that the changes did not fully address the loss of privacy that his home would suffer from. He noted that the local planning documents had no minimum distance from a balcony to a garden boundary (the figure of 10.5m governed 1st floor windows), but he had seen figures of 12 – 14m in guidance from elsewhere. He commented that the screening slats would provide good privacy for those inside the balcony area, but would still allow a clear view out over neighbouring gardens. He asked why the proposals would position the balcony to look over neighbouring gardens, but not the gardens of the application site itself. He repeated his view that a two-storey building was not appropriate at the plot in question.

77. Planning Consultations

Cllr Morris declared an interest as a designated substitute on the Planning Committee at Fylde Borough Council.

The Council considered the planning applications which the Borough Council had consulted on, since the last meeting. Regarding 26/0171 at 10 Audley Close, Cllrs Frith-Williams and P Wilkinson advised that they were still minded to object to the revised proposals, because there was still an infringement on privacy and residential amenity.

RESOLVED: i) that the Parish Council object to the second submission of application 26/0171 at 10 Audley Close on the grounds of loss of privacy and that the application is contrary to policy GD7 of the Local Plan; and

ii) that the Parish Council has no comments on any of the other presented applications.

78. Payments to Note

The Council noted the following payments which were made to comply with contractual terms and due dates under Financial Regulations 6.8(iii) and 11.4:

31/07/26	Unity Bank	£8.80	Service charge
03/08/26	Easy Websites	£63.36	Website & email
04/08/26	Talbot	£540.00	Storage unit hire: July, August, September

The Council noted the following payments made in accordance with explicit authorisation at Minute 70:

04/08/26	D Wilkinson	£340.00	Reimburse SumUp Chargeback
04/08/26	Fylde Borough Council	£6,994.19	Park By-election recharge

79. Payments for Authorisation

The Council was asked to authorise the following payments:

D Guise	£84.99	Expense – Microsoft 365 licence for PC laptop – annual renewal
D Guise	£10.00	Expense – Phone top-up

In response to a question from Cllr Frith-Williams, the Clerk confirmed that the Microsoft licence had not been applied to a personal account. The licence was purchased against an email address registered by the parish council. It would not be available to him personally, but would follow whoever had use of the council's laptop. However, since the purchase had to be made by card, and it was critical to the council's operation, it had been necessary for the Clerk to incur the expense himself.

RESOLVED: that the presented payments be approved.

80. Christmas Lights Switch-On

Cllr D Wilkinson reported that the Events & Community Engagement Committee had met a couple of weeks earlier and had considered a budget of £7,500 for the Switch-On, including some contingency. She talked the Council through the budget breakdown. She noted that it was under £7,000, but asked the Council to agree a budget of £8,000 to allow for additional contingency, including the possible need for a generator. This budget did not include any funds for the repair or installation of the lights themselves.

Cllr D Wilkinson reported that her biggest concern was the timing of the road closure. Cllr Perkins asked if the Council was comfortable purchasing selection boxes from Kelly's. Councillors agreed that this was acceptable.

Cllr Roe proposed that the £8,000 budget be approved. Cllr Perkins seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED: that a budget of £8,000 for the Christmas lights switch-on event be approved.

Cllr Perkins reported that he had made some enquiries regarding purchasing new Christmas lights. He reported that prices were between £300 and £600 per lamppost feature/motif. He suggested that the Council needed to use someone with expertise, and it would be ideal to include festoons, if possible. Cllr D Wilkinson advised that she wanted lights outside the Institute, and she queried whether stress tests would be needed for festoons. Cllr P Wilkinson noted that St Anne's Town Council had put in place a 5-year plan and contract for Christmas lights, and they might be a good source of advice.

RESOLVED: i) that a working group be formed to progress the arrangements for installing new lights; and
ii) that the members of the group be Cllrs Perkins, Roe and Taylor.

81. Psychic Night Fundraiser

Cllr D Wilkinson reported that the Events Committee had considered running a Psychic Night fundraiser on 16th October. A cost of £120 would be incurred to hire the room, and all money raised would go towards the Christmas lights, as happened with the fundraising Ball in 2025. She noted that it should be possible to run a successful raffle, as had been done at the Ball (when over 40 prizes were donated). Cllr D Wilkinson formally proposed the plan, and Cllr Roe seconded.

RESOLVED: that the Council run the proposed Psychic Night fundraiser and approve the £120 purchase for room hire.

82. Mobile Card Payments

Cllr P Wilkinson noted the issues that had arisen from using a private card payment machine at the ball. As a result, the Events Committee had asked the Council to investigate obtaining its own machine, to allow it to accept card payments. Councillors noted that this would raise a number of points, such as who would be authorised to make refunds and administer chargebacks, what training would be required, who would be the provider, and updating the council's risk assessment. Cllr Frith-Williams offered to work on a policy with the Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the principle of acquiring a mobile card payment machine be approved, subject to the mitigation of risks via a policy to be approved by the Council.

83. Review of the Staffing (Clerk Management) Committee

Cllr P Wilkinson noted a proposal written by Cllr Frith-Williams to dissolve the Staffing or Clerk Management Committee and establish a Working Group instead. He advised that the Council would retain all formal decisions, and that the working group would have the same membership as the dissolved committee.

Cllr P Wilkinson noted that no Terms of Reference had yet been drawn up for the committee. He noted that every committee meeting costs money in room hire charges and travel expenses, and the clerk's time in attending and taking minutes.

RESOLVED: i) that the existing Staffing or Clerk management Committee be dissolved;

ii) that a Staffing Working Group be established with the same membership as the dissolved committee;

iii) that the Council delegates the Working Group to undertake supervision, appraisal, recruitment, preparation and other staffing-related work on behalf of the Council;

iv) that the Council retains all formal employment decisions unless specifically delegated by Council resolution; and

v) that the Council requests revised Terms of Reference and any consequential amendments to the Council's governance documents for approval.

84. Internal Audit Action Plan

The Clerk reported that no progress had been made with the items on the action plan, since the last meeting.

It was noted that the next ordinary meeting of the Council would be held at 7pm on 28th September 2026.

The meeting finished at 8:00pm.