

MINUTES OF A MEETING



Fradley Parish Council

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Minutes of the Fradley Parish Council Meeting held at 6:30pm at Fradley Village Hall on 12 June 2025.

Present:

Cllrs Mike Ashcroft, Phil Beswick, Emma Garner, Stuart Gilmour, and David Leytham (Chair).

In Attendance:

Claire Crompton (Clerk/RFO), District/Ward Cllr Derick Cross and 9 Members of the Public.

25/17 – Apologies for Absence. Local Govt Act 1972 s85 (1)

There were no apologies for absence.

25/18 – Declarations of Members' Interests.

Cllr Ashcroft declared an interest in the item concerning the Fradley Heritage Group, as he is a member of that organisation, which has submitted an application for a community grant from the Parish Council. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the Localism Act 2011, he stated he would abstain from voting on, or taking part in, any discussion or decision on this matter.

25/19 – Co-option of Councillors Local Govt Act 1972 s87(2) and the completion of their Declarations of Acceptance of Office and Register of Members Interest Forms Local Government Act 1972 s 83 (4)

There were no candidates for Co-option.

25/20 – Adjournment for Public Speaking. Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 s1 extended by the LG Act 1972 s100.

Apologies were noted from County Cllr Richard Holland.

A member of the public addressed the Council regarding concerns about the proposed access for the Horner Avenue development. They expressed that the current road layout is unsuitable for construction traffic, citing issues such as restricted residential parking, blind bends, and an anticipated increase in traffic volume, including potentially over 200 additional vehicles. Concerns were raised that allowing 109 new homes could set a precedent for further development. The resident emphasised the negative impact on the quality of life for those living near both Horner Avenue and Shaw Drive, where construction traffic is likely to be routed. Residents asked whether the Parish Council still opposes the application, noting that while most original objections have now been addressed by the developer, traffic safety remains a key unresolved issue. It was suggested that the community continue to use the dedicated Facebook page created for the Horner Avenue planning application to share and receive updates. The speaker also recommended that any continued Parish Council opposition focus specifically on the remaining traffic-related concerns.

A separate member of the public requested improved communication from the Parish Council regarding all planning applications. They proposed the creation of an email mailing list so that interested residents can receive timely updates by opting in.

District Cllr Cross joined the meeting, he did not provide a formal report on this occasion.

PCSO Report:

The PCSOs thanked the council for the invitation to attend but offered apologies for their non-attendance. They provided the following update for the period 12th May – 11th June 2025, sharing information on incidents relevant to local community concerns:

- **HGV Issues:**
The local Neighbourhood Team is monitoring this matter. Patrols have visited the location to offer education, support, and enforcement where needed. Monitoring will continue where possible.
- **25/05 – Public Order Incident:**
Neighbour dispute reported on Love Lane. Enquiries are ongoing in partnership with the Police and Housing Association.
- **28/05 – Vehicle Thefts:**
Two incidents reported in the Screwfix Car Park, Nanscawen Road:
 - Attempted theft of a Land Rover Defender.
 - Theft of a Ford Fiesta ST (taken without keys).CCTV enquiries are ongoing.
- **29/05 & 04/06 – Attempted Vehicle Theft:**
Incident on Murphey Street. Offenders were unable to bypass the vehicle's immobiliser on 29th May, and a second attempt on 4th June was foiled when the owner activated the car alarm. CCTV enquiries are ongoing.
- **06/06 – Vehicle Crime:**
A grey Ford Ranger was stolen without keys from Salt Way. Patrols in the area conducted a full search, locating the vehicle later on Fisherwick Road. Forensic and CCTV opportunities are being pursued.
- **11/06 – Vehicle Crime:**
A red Peugeot 308 GTI was stolen from Gilbert Close. CCTV enquiries are ongoing.
- **30/05 – Transport Issues:**
HGVs causing issues on Halifax Avenue. The Local Policing Team is addressing this as resources allow.
- **07/06 – Community Speed Watch (CSW):**
CSW volunteers were active from 11:00–12:00, helping to keep local roads safer. A big thank you was noted for their contribution.

25/21 – Variation to the Order of Business.

There were no variations to the order of business.

25/22 – To receive a presentation from a representative of the FYCC regarding proposed access path works and boundary fencing improvements.

The Chairman of the Fradley Youth and Community Centre (FYCC) attended the meeting to discuss planned hard-standing and tarmacking works required to complete the final part of the planning permission for the building. These works are intended to provide a compliant emergency exit route under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). The necessary funds for the project have now been secured. One proposed solution for the emergency pathway involves routing it through Parish Council land, which would require opening the existing fence line. Photographs were presented showing the current state and proposed layout. Permission is being sought from the Parish Council to use the land and to remove one fence panel to allow pedestrian access. It was noted that while the panel being removed is wider than the intended path, there is no plan to replace it with a smaller section. The gap would not be wide enough to permit vehicular access.

The muster point for the FYCC remains the car park. Additionally, the FYCC proposes installing a pathway down the side of the building, along the boundary with the Village Hall. This would link to the existing Parish Council footpath network. The Chairman also outlined plans to erect a new fence matching the existing style by St Stephens School, along the boundary between the Village Hall and FYCC, replacing the current timber fence that is showing signs of age. The new fencing would consist of two steel panels at 8 feet in height, tapering to 4 feet with a gate between the FYCC and Village Hall. The estimated cost for this fencing work, if completed at the same time as the emergency path, is £6,240 (including VAT). If completed separately, the cost would rise to £6,600. It was confirmed that the contractor has previous experience working within the village. A full specification can be provided to the Council upon request. The Chairman of the FYCC also enquired about the availability of S106 funds or Parish Council community grants to help fund the fencing project. He was advised to submit formal funding applications to Lichfield District Council (for S106) and to the Parish Council for a community grant.

1 member of the public left.

25/23 –To confirm the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 15th May 2025.

RESOLVED: It was noted that the original draft document circulated stated “Minutes of the Fradley Parish Council Meeting”. The document brought to Council to approve and sign as been amended to state “Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council”. The draft minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 15th May 2025 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

AGREED; unanimously.

25/24 – Planning Matters

N.B - Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Sched. 1, para.8 - Right to be notified of planning applications if right has been requested. The Parish Council is a non-statutory consultee within the planning process.

Receive and consider report from the Planning Advisory Group:

- a. To determine any additional action required on the planning application information, from information circulated via email by officers in advance of the meeting.**

Application No.	Location	Proposal	Comments by
25/00583/FUL	Land Off , Wellington Crescent, Fradley Park, Lichfield	Erection of ancillary storage building, anchored to existing hardstanding.	Application Rec: 19.05.25 Comment by: 09.06.25 Ext until:
25/00001/REF 22/00106/FULM	Land Off Horner Avenue, Fradley, Lichfield, Staffordshire	Appeal against refusal of planning application 22/00106/FULM for a residential development (109 units) with associated works and public open space, and access from Horner Avenue and Ward Close	Application Rec: 21.05.25

Fradley Parish Council do not wish to comment on application 25/00583/FUL .

Fradley Parish Council wish to make representation at the hearing of application 25/00001/REF

To note the outcome of the following planning applications for which the Council has made full comment:

25/00437/FUH	57 Rogerson Road, Fradley, Lichfield, Staffordshire	Installation of air source heat pump	GRANTED
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Noted.

4 Members of the public left the meeting.

25/25 – Finance

- a. To consider the following payments, any payments required after publication of the agenda will be advised at the meeting.

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	POWER
June 2025			
Tesco (paid by card)	Refreshments Tree Ceremony	38.40	LGA 1972 s145
Tesco	Stationary	7.05	LGA 1972 s111
St Stephens PTA	Community Grant	5,000.00	Section 137 Grant
Fradley Community Choir	Community Grant	483.53	Section 137 Grant
Focus Group (DD)	Telephone Line	24.16	LGA 1972 s111
Unity Trust	Service Charge	7.80	LGA 1972 s111
Salaries, TAX,NIC	May Payment	3610.06	LGA 1972 s112 - 119
Claire Crompton	Expenses	13.49	LGA 1972 s111
JR Landscaping	Ground Maintenance Contract	2814.88	Open Space Act 1906 s9,10
D Beaumont	Handyman Contract	320.00	Open Space Act 1906 s9,10
Fradley Village Hall	Room Hire	61.62	LGA 1972 s111
S Bedlow	Newsletter Delivery (Sheasby)	94.00	LGA 1972 s142
1 st Fradley Scouts	Newsletter Delivery (Village)	288.40	LGA 1972 s142
Austen Prince	Payroll	870.00	LGA 1972 s111
East Midlands Audit Service	Subscription	113.00	LGA 1972 s111

RESOLVED: The Council approved the schedule of payments for June 2025.

AGREED; Unanimously.

- b. To note the following income:

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
HMRC	VAT Reclaim	25,335.90

Noted.

- c. To consider the unaudited accounts from 1.04.2024 to 31.05.2025, including all supporting documents provided by the Clerk.

31.05.2025

Current Account	£377,999.40
Unpresented Payments	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL	£377,999.40

RESOLVED: The Parish Council AGREED the above payments and unaudited accounts provided by the Clerk. AGREED: unanimously.

25/26 – Year End Accounts as at 31 March 2025

1. Year End Accounts to 31.03.2025

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations, Fradley Parish Council are obliged to conduct a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls and Financial Regulations. In relation to the effectiveness of the system of internal audit, Fradley Parish Council has appointed a qualified auditor to act as its independent internal auditor.

a. Section 1 – Annual Return - Annual Governance Statement 2024/2025 for approval.

- i Consider the findings of the Review of the effectiveness of the systems of Internal Control by the members as a whole.

RESOLVED: Fradley Parish Council, having reviewed the Effectiveness of the Systems of Internal Control and the Annual Governance Statement, approved the Annual Governance Statement and the current arrangements in place for internal control. AGREED: unanimously.

- ii Approve the Annual Governance Statement by resolution in advance of approving the Accounting Statement.

Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement sets out Fradley Parish Councils responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of Internal Control, including the preparation of the accounting statement.

Therefore, the Parish Council Members are asked to confirm that the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/2025 fairly reflects the corporate governance arrangements in place for the Parish Council in relation to this matter. Fradley Parish Council members were asked to confirm, to the best of their knowledge, the Council's Corporate Governance arrangements set out in Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/2025 were correct as follow:

The Clerk asked The Parish Council members to either agree yes, no, or not applicable with regards to the following statements:

Box 1 - Has the Council put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements. Has the Council prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED: YES, Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had put in place arrangements for the effective financial management during the year and had prepared their accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Box 2 - Has the Council maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness. Has the Council made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.

RESOLVED: YES, Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures to prevent and detect fraud and corruption, and they had proper arrangements in place and accepted responsibility for safeguarding public money and resources in their charge.

Box 3 - Has the Council taken all reasonable steps to assure themselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the authority to conduct its business or manage its finances. Has the Council only done what it has the legal power to do and has it complied with Proper Practices in doing so?

RESOLVED: Yes, Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had taken all reasonable steps to assure themselves that there were no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of Fradley Parish Council to conduct their business or manage their finances. Fradley Parish

Council AGREED they had only done what they have the legal power to do and have complied with proper practices.

Box 4 - Has the Council provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations? Has the Council during the year given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the authority's accounts.

RESOLVED: Yes, Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the authority's accounts throughout the year.

Box 5 - Has the Council carried out an assessment of the risks facing the authority and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required. Has the Council considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.

RESOLVED: YES, Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had carried out an assessment of the risks facing them and had taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, this included internal controls and external insurance cover where appropriate. Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had considered the financial and other risks they have faced and dealt with them properly.

Box 6 - Has the Council maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems. Has the Council arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of the smaller authority.

RESOLVED: YES, Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had in place throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems. Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had arranged for a competent internal auditor, independent of their financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls met the needs of the Council.

Box 7 - Has the Council taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit. Has the Council responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.

RESOLVED: YES, Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit. There were no matters brought to its attention by either the internal or external audit.

Box 8 - Has the Council considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have had a financial impact on the authority and, where appropriate, have the Council included them in the accounting statements. Has the Council disclosed everything it should about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.

RESOLVED: YES, Fradley Parish Council AGREED they had considered where relevant, any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, which may have had a financial impact on the Council and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statement. Fradley Parish Council AGREED they have disclosed everything they should about their business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end where relevant.

Box 9 - In the Councils capacity as the sole managing trustee, has the Council discharged its accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. Has the Council met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

RESOLVED: NOT APPLICABLE, Fradley Parish Council AGREED this was not applicable as they are not responsible for any charities.

b. Section 2 – Annual Return – Accounting Statement 2024/2025

- i. Consider the Accounting Statement by the members as a whole.
- ii. Approve the Accounting Statement by resolution.
- iii. Ensure the Accounting statements are signed and dated by the Chairperson of the meeting and the Responsible Financial Officer.

RESOLVED: Fradley Parish Council approved that the year-end Accounting Statement for 31.03.2025 in the Annual Return Section 2, represented fairly the financial position of the Council and their income and expenditure. AGREED: unanimously.

RESOLVED: Fradley Parish Council AGREED for the Accounting Statement 2024/2025 to be signed and dated by the Chair and Clerk/RFO. AGREED: unanimously.

- c. Confirm the dates of 16 June 2025 to 25 July 2025 for the Notice of Publication of unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31.03.2025 and the Provision of the Exercise of Public Rights.**

RESOLVED: Fradley Parish Council approved the dates as listed above. AGREED: unanimously.

RESOLVED: The Year-End Accounts to 31.03.2025, Annual Governance Statement and Annual Return – Accounting Statement 2024/2025 were approved by members of Fradley Parish Council. AGREED: unanimously.

25/27 – Confirmation for East Midlands Audit Services Ltd to complete the Internal Audit for 2025/2026.

RESOLVED: Fradley Parish Council approved East Midlands Audit Services Ltd complete the Internal Audit for 2025/2026. AGREED: unanimously.

25/28 – To receive a report from the working group and to discuss their recommendations. This is to include Community Grant applications received this month.

Project Work

WG25/12 – Worthington Road Park Refurbishment (CIL-Funded Project)

District Councillor Derick Cross reported on the latest meeting with Helen McKenzie, Project Manager at Lichfield District Council. Helen confirmed her fee would be 10% of the project value.

Due to delays on the Church project, the Play Park refurbishment is now taking priority, particularly as some CIL funding must be spent by year-end.

The Church project budget has increased from £80,000 to £118,000, leaving £193,500 available for the Worthington Road Park project. This sum includes the 10% project management fee.

The working group will identify three priority items for each play park to enable the project to go out to tender. District Cllr Cross will act as the sole point of contact for this project.

At present, the 10% project management fee will only apply to the initial £193,500 budget allocation, although all elements of the project will be managed by the appointed project manager.

Helen McKenzie queried the proposed £10,000 ground levelling cost. The Clerk has been asked to provide a justification for this estimate.

The following priority items were proposed by the Council:

Worthington Road Park:

- 3-Tower Jigsaw with Slide – £18,977
- Jungle Climber (no slide) – £13,985
- Cone Climber – £10,606

Barlow Drive Park:

- 3-Tower Jigsaw – £12,387
- Inclusive Jigsaw Tower – £12,282
- Big Square Trampoline – £6,943

The possibility of allocating an additional £80,549 from Parish Council reserves to complete both sites was discussed. This will be formally debated at the next full council meeting. Members also raised questions regarding a potential five-year parts and labour warranty.

Members noted that the current project to upgrade Worthington Road Play Park is projected to exceed its budget by £80,549. This figure includes the 10% project management fee calculated on the overall project value.

RESOLVED: To address this shortfall, members agreed that historical Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds, required to be spent before October 2026, would be utilised in the first instance. The remaining balance would be met from the Council's earmarked reserves allocated for asset replacement. AGREED: unanimously.

Cllrs Derick Cross, Mike Wilcox and Derek Beaumont left the meeting at this point.

WG25/13 – Christmas Lights Locations

The group discussed potential locations for installing festive lighting, taking into account costs, feasibility, and visual impact.

The Clerk reported on a meeting with a supplier recommended by SLCC, who outlined the initial steps required to proceed. The Clerk will now make enquiries into necessary permissions, safety testing, and licensing. Councillors agreed that the three suggested locations were appropriate.

Engagement Group

WG25/14 – Parish Newsletter & Cllr Tech Support

The group noted successful delivery of the latest newsletter to all households. Preparations for the next edition are underway.

Cllr Ashcroft advised he uses an Apple Mac and does not have Microsoft Word. The Clerk and other councillors suggested compatible free alternatives to aid document formatting.

Topics for the next edition include:

- St Stephen's 150th Celebration
- Commemorative Tree Ceremony
- Open Gardens
- S106 project updates
- Summary of recent Community Grants

Draft articles are to be submitted to Cllr Ashcroft. He will compile and forward them to the Clerk, who will liaise with the newsletter editor.

WG25/15 – Horner Avenue Appeal / Land off Common Lane

The group discussed the upcoming planning appeal and considered whether Parish Council-owned land behind Shaw Drive could be used as an alternative access route for construction vehicles, to avoid disruption on Horner Avenue.

The Clerk will consult District Valuer Services to obtain a formal land valuation. Further discussion will follow once information is received.

WG25/16 – Community Grant Application – Fradley Heritage Group

The Heritage Group has applied for a £900 community grant to purchase a storage unit for use at the barns on Bridge Farm Lane.

Councillors raised questions regarding the condition of the barn, whether it is damp-proofed, and what artefacts will be stored. The Clerk will obtain further details.

A final decision will be made at the next Parish Council meeting.

RESOLVED: The Community Grant Application from the Heritage Society was deferred. Members also suggested inviting a representative of the Heritage Society to attend the next Parish Council meeting to provide further details and answer questions about the proposal.

Environment Group

WG25/17 – Hedge & Footpath Complaints

The group reviewed several complaints about overgrown hedges and obstructed footpaths. These areas fall outside the Parish Council's responsibility.

The matter will be referred to the County Councillor for clarification of ownership and action by the relevant authority.

WG25/18 – Bat Box Project Update

Cllr Beswick confirmed that the bat box doors have now been ordered. Although Bellway Homes were initially supportive, they are currently unable to assist.

The Clerk has submitted a revised request asking Bellway to consider supplying materials only. If successful, Cllr Beswick has volunteered to complete the work.

WG25/19 – Grounds Maintenance Checks

Councillors discussed the ongoing programme of visual checks. Weed growth continues to be a concern in several areas.

Improving the parish's overall appearance remains a priority, especially in light of increasing feedback from residents regarding maintenance standards.

25/29 – Clerk Reports:

a. Parish Council Diary Dates:

SLCC Branch Meeting: 17th June 2025, The White Room, SCC. **Noted**

SPCA Online Brief of Local Reorganisation in Staffordshire: 18th June, 6pm, on Teams. **Noted**

St Stephens Big Birthday Bash: 28th June 2025, 12pm – 4pm, St Stephens School. **Noted**

Parish Network Meeting: 30th June 2025, Chase Terrace Community Centre. **Noted**

- b. To note the updated proposal for the Worthington Road Play Park has been received and distributed. **Noted**
- c. To note the Internal Auditor Report 16.05.25. **Noted**
- d. To note the Annual Neighbourhood CIL report has been sent to LDC. **Noted**
- e. To note the newsletter deliveries are now complete. **Noted**
- f. To note the funds for the Community Grant applications agreed previously have been transferred. **Noted**
- g. To note the Clerk has begun work on St Stephens Big Birthday Bash event and quotes obtained. **Noted**
- h. The Clerk has provided a list of training courses provided by the SLCC for June and July, should Cllrs wish to part in any, please email the Clerk directly. **Noted**

25/30 – Date and time of the next Parish Council Meetings to be confirmed as 17th July 2025 at Fradley Village Hall commencing at 7pm.

RESOLVED: The Council AGREED the next Parish Council Meeting as 17th July 2025, at 7.0pm, Fradley Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 20.30pm.