

Feckenham Parish Council

Ordinary Meeting.

Thursday 18th September 2025

1. APOLOGIES: Cllr Paul Downs (Accepted absence), Cllr Ian Bellion (Accepted Reason), Cllr Rob Oaten (Accepted reason), Cllr Craig Warhurst (RBC).

In attendance: Cllr Alan Smith (Chair), Cllr Jacqui Barret-Meade, Cllr Erica Guise, Cllr Karen Reynolds, Cllr Chris Hoyz (RBC), Cllr Brandon Clayton (RBC), Cllr Roger Bennett (WCC), Cllr Sue Eacock (WCC), and Jane Bull Clerk to FPC

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS: None.

a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda.

b) To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary and nonpecuniary interests (S33 of the

Localism Act 2011) which are to be with the clerk as soon as possible prior to a meeting.

c) TO CONSIDER GRANTING REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Requests for dispensation must be made on an individual basis.

3. MINUTES: To consider the approval of the Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 10th July 25. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. All in agreement.

4. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT. Cllr Roger Bennett spoke about Unitary councils. At the last meeting at WWC all local councils apart from one wanted two unitary councils with a north south divide. This will continue to be discussed until the end of October and a report sent to central government who will decide. It is thought one unitary council rather than two will save around £5,000,000. Only 1% of the electorate in Worcestershire responded to the public survey on Unitary Councils. It is thought this was due to confusion from government. Eventually the three shire councils will combine and led by a mayor. It is said there will be 6,000 residents to one Councillor. Cllr Eacock said she had asked the Healthy Worcestershire Grants officer to contact the clerk about events paid for by the County Council.

5. BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT. Cllr Brandon Clayton reported Redditch will have its final meeting along with the other 5 Districts. At present four councils prefer two unitary councils and two councils prefer one unitary council. It was commented these arrangements and changes are costly to the taxpayer. The secretary of state will have the final decision but has said no decisions will be made until June 2026. In 2027 there will be elections for a shadow cabinet. In April 2028 Worcestershire County Council, Borough and District councils will disappear. The shadow councillors will then become "real."

Cllr Chris Hoyz advised PCSO's will no longer work beyond 8pm. The Borough Councillors have raised objections. These changes do not apply to response officers or neighbourhood officers.

Cllr Hoyz asked if the Borough council owned the allotments in Feckenham as in some Redditch areas there may be plans to sell the land for housing. This would not affect Feckenham as the Borough Council do not own the land.

The end of September is the cutoff date for developers to express their interest in potential land for new homes. Redditch should hear the outcome as where these areas will be found in Redditch.

6.OPEN FORUM

The Parish Council meeting will be suspended for 15 minutes. Residents are invited to give their views and question to the Parish Council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chair.

Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting.

7. PLANNING.

Planning comments given since last meeting: None.

For Council Consideration:

25/00888/FUL. Boom: Wheaten Hill BESS. The PC chose to object to the planning application. The objection will be written by our Consultant, Dr Chris Ford.

25/025/00984/FUL.Q18. Parklands Care Home- single storey extension. The PC agreed to leave the decision in the hands of the planning officer.

b. RBC Approvals: 25/00593/FUL Old Yarr. Excavation of Bank.

25/00108/FUL & 25/00109/LBC. The Priory.

25/00527/PIP. Alders Court, Green Lane.

c. RBC Refusals: None.

d. RBC Pending:

24/01057/scop Innova Renewables Ltd. scoping opinion.

23/00192/FUL. Cross Boundary application for W/23/00270/FUL, Roundhill Solar Farm

23/01308/FUL. about the Land at Rockhill Lane, Astwood Lane. Roundhill Solar Farm.

W/23/00270/FUL. Roundhill Solar Farm (Wychavon Planning Authority).

25/00628/FUL Grenergy BESS.

21/00249/FUL. Land North of Droitwich Road. The PC will ask for an update.

24/00604/FUL 43 Alcester Road for a Domestic garage to front of main property and associated landscaping work.

24/00538/FUL Access on land south of Astwood Lane

e. RBC Withdrawn: 23/00417/FUL. Immersa BESS Development.

f. RBC Appeals: 23/01332/FUL Redditch Golf Club. **Dismissed.**

g. RBC Permission Required: None.

8. FINANCE

As the Parish Council now have accounts package you will find the latest figures added to the agenda / minutes which will show all payments and account balances. The PC accepted the

9. NEW AGENDA ITEMS

a. Project Gigabit. Project Gigabit is the UK Government's £5 billion national broadband programme run by Building Digital UK (BDUK), part of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. Its purpose is to extend gigabit-capable broadband (1,000 Mbps) to hard-to-reach homes and businesses that will not be served by commercial rollouts alone. The PC received a thorough presentation and will look to explain this in detail to the parish.

b. Planning Proposal to ask for professional help on strengthening planning comments in view of Government increase of housing targets. Postponed from July meeting. The parish council agreed to engage the services of Urban Vision Enterprise and work with Hannah Barter. Their expertise will help strengthen any planning objections or approvals the parish wish to make. The PC may need to register with the Borough Council for a neighbourhood plan.

c. Housing Needs Assessment. After discussion, the PC agreed to appointing Community First to conduct a housing needs assessment. Rebecca Seignior, Rural Housing Enabler will be helping the parish council to find out whether the parish is opposed to new developments or in favour in specific locations and what or how this would work in the Parish. It is especially important parishioners tell the parish council their opinions.

d. Communication Policy. The PC agreed to adopt the policy,

e. Damaged pavements & Bridle Paths.

f. Ongoing arrangements with FABBS. The PC agreed to write to FABBS Chair to request copies of minutes on a regular basis.

g. Feckenham Football Club. The parish council are pleased to announce Feckenham football club are hosting the Unity sports club CIC. This is an organisation specialising in sport for young children. They will play a maximum of two games on Saturday mornings and one game fortnightly on Sundays.

h. Copywrite Planning Objections. Postponed until next meeting due to Cllr absences.

10. CLERK'S UPDATE

- A. Schedule of Correspondence for Consideration (not already noted). The clerk brought to the attention of our WCC Councillors the outstanding issues with WCC Highways.
- B. Schedule of Tabled Correspondence Received (not already noted). The clerk had found Worcestershire's on demand bus service has expanded and now covers Bromsgrove including Hanbury. As Feckenham has such poor public transport this would be of major help to Feckenham residents who wish to travel to Worcester Hospital or Droitwich. Cllr Eacock agreed to speak with WCC to see if it could be extended to Feckenham. Dial a ride in Redditch is excellent but can only travel within Redditch.
- C. Schedule of Correspondence Sent (not already noted) The clerk had asked for all outstanding time sheets as none received since May. This is in preparation for the 6-months accounts in October.

11. PROGRESS REPORTS

- a) Update on Redditch Local Plan. See RBC Cllrs report.
- b) Unitary Authority. See WCC Cllrs report.
- c) Worcestershire Wildlife Trust- No Update.
- d) Update on Round Hill Solar Farm Project. No Update.
- e) Boom Power BESS Facility. Dr Chris Ford is preparing an objection on behalf of the parish.
- f) Innova BESS application. No Update.
- g) Feedback from Feckenham Energy Action Group. None.
- h) Progress on WCC pension application. The clerk has registered and notified the pensions dept she declines the pension.
- i) FVAT update. No update.
- j) Church Walk- Ownership and legal costs. No Update. The PC agreed this action could be dropped as it was unlikely to change.
- k) Feckenham Flooding and WCC Highways. NWWM said they were trying to get all the information together on earlier floods and whether they had entered property. The potential works are being studied and costed. The PC will be contributing monies towards the works.
- l) Feckenham in Bloom: Working Party: The FIB group will be applying to Feckenham Charity for a grant to replace a dead tree, shrubs, a new barrel to plant up and more bulbs. Despite the scorching summer all other trees and shrubs have survived thanks to the diligent watering rotas.
- m) Update on Bridge repairs on B4090. No Update.
- n) Update on adding Feckenham Digital Archive and Feckenham Archaeology to FPC website. Works are steady on the digital archive. The archaeology group have not yet decided when they will be in a position to go ahead. Item to be removed after this meeting.

12. COUNCILLORS REPORTS & FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councillors may use this opportunity to report matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas.

DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

7:30pm on 9th October 2025 at Feckenham Village Hall.

All welcome to attend.

Public Forum

A member of public attended the meeting to inform the parish council about Project Gigabit.

Another member of public attended to answer any questions the parish council may have on the Wheaten Hill BESS application. The PC said the appointed planning consultant would be raising an objection but thanked them for attending the meeting.

Meeting close at 9.40pm.

Signature
redacted.