

Feckenham Parish Council

Ordinary Meeting.

Thursday 9th October 2025.

Minutes.

In attendance: Cllr Ian Bellion (Acting chair), Cllr Erica Guise, Cllr Rob Oaten, Cllr Karen Reynolds, Cllr Paul Downes, Cllr Brandon Clayton (RBC), Cllr Chris Hoyz (RBC), Cllr Roger Bennett (WCC), Cllr Sue Eacock (WCC), and Jane Bull, clerk to FPC.

1. APOLOGIES: Cllr Alan Smith (accepted reason) and Cllr Jacqui Barrett-Meade (Accepted reason). Cllr Bellion as vice-chair was elected as chair of the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:

a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None.

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. None.

Requests for dispensation must be made on an individual basis.

3. MINUTES: To consider the approval of the Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 18th September 25. The minutes were accepted as a true representation of the meeting. All in agreement.

4. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT. The planned reorganisation with unitary councils is still the main conversation. During week beginning 13th October a meeting will be held with the CEO of County Council. It is thought there will be one unitary council although not all District/Borough councils agree. The decision will be and announced on 6th November.

Correspondence had been received about resurfacing Moors Lane and a request for WCC to do this due to its poor condition. Cllr Roger Bennett had acknowledged their concerns but advised this matter had been previously investigated and it is not a publicly maintained road, therefore WCC are not responsible for its upkeep. The initial part of the lane is adopted to the end of the tarmac, but the remainder is unadopted. The PC said they had given a grant of £5,000 towards improvements. Cllr Brandon Clayton added the lane is classed as a bridleway and bridleways are not tarmacked.

5. BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT. Councillors reported they were due to meet and decide their preferred position on two unitary councils or one. The Borough would prefer to two unitary councils. The decision is made by central government. As there has been a recent change of minister it is unsure as to how this may change.

The upgrading of the train station and train service has been reduced. There will be limited improvements to the train station but no additional trains or districts.

The Borough Councillors have written to West Merica requesting they are notified in advance of Public and Crime Commissioner meetings (PAC) in the village.

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 Wheaten Hill, Boom Energy. To consider planning consultant's objection and approve or disapprove. The parish council considered the detailed report produced by Dr Chris Ford on behalf of Feckenham. It was agreed unanimously with the report's findings and objection to the application. This will be submitted to the Borough Council Planning Department.

b. RBC Approvals: None.

c. RBC Refusals: None.

d. RBC Pending:

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).

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

25/00628/FUL Greenergy BESS.

25/00888/FUL Wheaten Hill. BESS.

21/00249/FUL. Land North of Droitwich Road.

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

25/00984/FUL Parklands care home.

e. RBC Withdrawn: None.

f. RBC Appeals: None.

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.

9. NEW AGENDA ITEMS

a. Healthy Worcestershire.

Cllr Sue Eacock (WCC) spoke about Healthy Worcestershire projects in Redditch. Many areas have received funding via [Community projects and funding | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Community health and wellbeing go beyond physical health. It is about fostering a sense of belonging, mental resilience, social inclusion, and access to resources that help residents live fulfilling lives.

Key areas include:

Physical Health: Promoting active lifestyles through safe walking routes, sports facilities, and community fitness programs.

Mental Wellbeing: Reducing isolation, offering support networks, and raising awareness about mental health.

Social Connectivity: Creating opportunities for residents to come together, share experiences, and support one another.

Environmental Health: Providing clean, green spaces where people can relax, exercise, and reconnect with nature.

It may be possible to arrange something similar in Feckenham if people are interested. The sessions could be a gentle exercise session followed by informative sessions on current scams, healthy eating, bingo, and of course chatting to your neighbours. If this is of interest to you, please do contact the clerk.

b. Accounts Mid-Year to include budget virements. In order to meet financial commitments both for the current year and accruing reserves for later projects, the PC agreed to the virements within the parish council accounts. The new budgets will be uploaded to the accounts section for 2025-2026. All in agreement.

c. To look at moving reserves into higher interest accounts or options.

At present the parish council have more than the recommended limits in the savings account which funds projects and day to day council expenses. The PC took the decision to open another account to maximise interest paid. They specified it must have easy access and be user friendly to obtain monies without delays. The PC agreed they would need a specific policy surrounding the investments.

d. Outcome of 2024/2025 Audit of Accounts.

The accounts were both internally and externally audited. There were no issues found.

e. Zoom Membership. The PC agreed to fund another year on Zoom.

f. Replacement volunteer Parish Path Warden.

The clerk has written to the volunteer path warden and asked if they would be prepared to do a further year with a reduction in works. The VPW has agreed to conduct essential works only to give the parish time to find a replacement. The PC send their thanks.

g. To decide upon questions for Housing Needs Survey and amendments.

Councillors made suggestions for the survey to better reflect the needs of Feckenham. In particular it was felt that the suggested survey over-emphasised the building of affordable housing. The Council resolved to return the amended survey to Community First for preparation for publication and distribution. The PC has commissioned Community First to conduct the survey. They will hold the information securely and present the final report to the Council. Any identifying information will not be shared with the PC. This is intended to inform the Parish Council how Feckenham feels about planning applications including area, quantity, type, and rent or owned.

h. To consider registering for a neighbourhood plan with Redditch Borough Council.

From research it was found Feckenham had made an application to register for a neighbourhood plan with the Borough Council. On inspection of the LPA the PC note that the Neighbourhood Area is designated and now the Plan preparation can commence.

i. Clerk's annual wage increases from £19.66 to £20.29 backdated to 1st April 2025.

Noted and agreed by full council.

j. Copyright Planning Objections. Dr Ford will be sending resumes of the most recent planning objections. These will be available on www.feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk or contact the clerk.

10. CLERK'S UPDATE

A. Schedule of Correspondence for Consideration (not already noted). The clerk will write to our neighbourhood police team and request police presence at some meetings in view of the change of hours of the PCSO's. The clerk had recently attended a seminar on grant applications which will be of use when applying for grants.

B. Schedule of Tabled Correspondence Received (not already noted). None.

C. Schedule of Correspondence Sent (not already noted) None.

11. PROGRESS REPORT

- a. The PC have engaged with planning consultant, Hannah Barter from Urban Vision Enterprise. Hannah will help the parish make suitable comments for any large development applications. On inspection of the LPA the PC note that the Neighbourhood Area is designated and now the Plan preparation can commence.

- b. Project Gigabit: The council noted the suggestions made in the correspondence received. It was agreed that it would not be possible to conduct a survey to assess the need for an improved service. It was noted that such a survey would be expected to achieve a 75-85% response rate, and it was acknowledged that this would be impossible to achieve. It was further agreed that parishioners should be encouraged to register their interest with Openreach through www.openreach.com/fibrebroadband-network/fibre-availability

- c. Damaged stiles on public rights of way & bridle paths.

The stiles are the responsibility of the landowner in all cases unless of course the land is owned by parish or local government (not many instances of that) In regard to maintenance the landowner should make sure stiles are usable or safe for the public. They are liable for any damage to clothing or injury caused by poorly maintained furniture. This includes any attachment of barbed wire on or near to a stile, which may cause injury. Such as in the event of someone falling, slipping, or faltering while using it and grabbing the nearest thing as a result. However, this can only be done with the landowner's consent where the stile is the historic limitation. WCC cannot enforce this and if they chose to stay with a stile then they will have to repair or replace.

- d. Update on Redditch Local Plan. See RBC Report.
- e. Unitary Authority. All councils around Worcestershire are likely to request a north/south divide other than Wyre Forrest who prefer one unitary council.
- f. Update on Round Hill Solar Farm Project. No Update.
- g. Boom Power BESS Facility. Dr Ford has sent the planning objection direct to Redditch planning department.
- h. Innova BESS application. No update.
- i. Feedback from Feckenham Energy Action Group. No update.
- j. FVAT update. No update.
- k. Feckenham Flooding and WCC Highways. Next meeting 16th October.
- l. Feckenham in Bloom: Working Party: The group have replaced a tree on Astwood Lane which had died despite all the watering carried throughout the summer. The group are trying to plant daffodils, but the hard ground is making the job much harder. The PC acknowledged and sent they're thanks to the group.
- m. Update on Bridge repairs on B4090. No update.

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.

RUP

After the next PC Meeting there will be another short meeting regarding Feckenham Village Amenity Trust.

DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

7:30pm on 13th November 2025 at Feckenham Village Hall.

All welcome to attend.

Signature
Redacted.