

GRAFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY 1 JULY 2026 at 18:30
The Empire Hall, Graffham

Meeting started: 1832		
<u>PRESENT</u> Cllr Gillian Charlesworth, Cllr John Bracey, Cllr Colin Barker, Cllr Simon Longman, Cllr Hilary Major and Parish Clerk Amy Harte.		
<u>IN ATTENDANCE</u> John Cross District Councillor CDC		
65/26 AGENDA ITEM 1: WELCOME Cllr Charlesworth		
66/26 AGENDA ITEM 2: APOLOGIES To receive apologies for absence and approve reasons for absence. Tom Richardson County Councillor WSCC		
67/26 AGENDA ITEM 3: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS		
68/26 AGENDA ITEM 4: MINUTES 1. To approve as an accurate record the minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held on 12 June 2026. (These minutes have been circulated to members prior to this Meeting.) The councillors RESOLVED that it was a true record of the meeting. A hard copy to be signed by Cllr Charlesworth after the meeting. 2. Action Points from the previous meeting: 1. East Lavington website changes made - Cllr Longman Councillors RESOLVED to let the old domain lapse. 2. Accounting systems update – Clerk The Clerk is exploring several accounting systems tailored for Parish Councils and will circulate a report following a meeting arranged for 2nd July. 3. Defibrillators – service checks – Clerk Clerk will get this done asap. 4. CIL report, VAT return and Annual Audit submitted – Clerk All submitted and the VAT has been paid. There has been an error identified by the auditors in the AGAR, box 11 ticked incorrectly, RESOLVED to amend to ‘yes’. 5. Schedule of regular payments – Clerk This will be easier to produce following adoption of an accounting system.	Clerk to email John Cross re old email address. Cllr Charlesworth to sign the minutes of the June meeting. Cllr Longman to remove the old Graffham domain. Clerk to complete the report on the systems and circulate to the councillors. Clerk to send corrected	

6. Planning application responses submitted 7. Policies – still to complete- Clerk & Cllr Charlesworth	AGAR and info on other points raised.	
69/26 AGENDA ITEM 5: VISITORS' QUESTIONS / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION None		
70/26 AGENDA ITEM 6: CDC REPORT CLLR JOHN CROSS CDC Matters July 2026 On Saturday 13th June, I went to Graffham Empire Hall to watch a film with a large number of the village's residents. The event was organised by Ginny Kingsmill and was a film highlighting a conference that was held in Westminster Conference Hall, opposite the Palace of Westminster. The film entitled the National Emergency Briefing, presented by Chris Packham, was a conference attended by political, business, sport, culture and faith leaders. The speakers were the leading experts not only on climate change, but economists, ex-military, and food and health experts. I would urge everyone to watch this presentation, its roughly 50 minutes long and a sobering state of where we are as a nation. It also is reflective and reaches out and demonstrates what we can do as citizens, this is not a problem leaders or someone else should be dealing with on our behalf, although that is true too, but all of us play apart. I won't say anymore, but I applaud Ginny and the residents of Graffham for getting together and watching this, at times uncomfortable viewing. If any other village or resident group wish to organise a public viewing, I would be happy to help in anyway. On a lighter note, on Friday 12th of June, I went to a Question and Answer session at Priory Park in Chichester, organised by the Priory Park Society to talk about the Cricket Pavilion that the District Council is about to demolish and rebuild. Since the early 1980s the building has been in a poor state and more recently unfit for the reality of men and women's cricket teams playing and using the same building. The new building will have unisex facilities, the old pavilion only had mens toilets, and will have separate changing rooms for the umpires, again in the past it was assumed that the umpire was the same sex as the players, that's not the case in today's game. The money for this re-build comes from S106 and CIL funding, these are monies that are gathered by the Council from developers to be spent on the community, and the rest of the money comes from the Council's Asset Replacement Budget (ARB). The District Council continues to invest and update the facilities across the district, nearer to home the Petworth Public Toilets will be refurbished at the end of this year. Getting back to the Cricket Pavilion, I had not realised that Chichester District really was the place where cricket as a game was established. I would be really interested to hear from residents about 18 or 19th century local connections to cricket, I am sure there is a rich story to be told here. John Cross Fittleworth Ward District Councillor		

John Cross was emailed by the Village Shop regarding funding for solar panels. CIL funding was mentioned but the shop has not approached the Parish Council. Road closures agreed different timings to avoid traffic issues around the Goodwood Revival. Business Grants – local start up grants and growth funds are available. Planning Committee meeting powers are being removed from planning committees such as red carding. This makes it more important for Parish Councils to make their comments on applications. Boundary review was discussed.	John Cross will direct the Village Shop to the Parish Council and SDNP.	
71/26 AGENDA ITEM 7: WSCC REPORT CLLR TOM RICHARDSON No report sent.		
72/26 AGENDA ITEM 8: MANAGEMENT OF THE EMPIRE HALL Hall office holders have indicated that they intend to resign at the annual Empire Hall AGM. Cllr Major has been consulting all trustees and stakeholders and will report on findings. Parish Council to consider whether the time has come to consider paid assistance for village administration, along with appropriate levels of automation for bookings and invoicing. Cllr Charlesworth suggested a different way to manage the administration of the hall, having a paid person to do the accounting and booking system. It was suggested by Cllr Charlesworth to speak to the users of the hall to try to find a Chair for the committee and suggested a village meeting with them to discuss the situation.	Cllr Major to decide on a meeting date with Cllr Charlesworth and then to invite the stakeholders.	
73/26 AGENDA ITEM 9: DESIGN STATEMENT The need for a design statement for the village (to be taken into account in planning applications) has been suggested. The Parish Council to discuss the need for such a statement before developing and consulting on it, if thought appropriate. Cllr Major explained that there has been a design statement around 30 years ago. Cllr Longman suggested Trevor Leggo may be of some help with this and stated that it must carry weight in planning.	Cllr Charlesworth will contact Lewis Ford and Cllrs to gather further information to allow this to progress.	
74/26 AGENDA ITEM 10: PROJECTS i) Speed limit plan. To be resubmitted as a Community Highways Scheme (by 31.07.26) following discussion of some finer details by the Parish Council on 1 July. ELPC felt that the 40mph speed limit would be better placed from Westerlands Lodge. Woodcote lane, 30 was felt to be too slow, so 40 was suggested. ii) Closed Churchyard. Cllr Charlesworth to revisit the WSCC records office to check records before 1970. iii) Recreation Ground Bookings & Finance. Cllr Charlesworth awaiting details of Pavillion hourly charges before seeking trial of booking system on Parish website. iv) Recreation Ground transfer of land Some further amends need to be sent to Fields in Trust.	Cllr Chalesworth will work with Michael to adjust the speed limit plan. Cllr Charlesworth will visit the records office. Cllr Charlewaoth will send the amended	

				document to the Clerk to forward.	
75/26 AGENDA ITEM 11: PROPOSED MERGER GRAFFHAM AND ELPC UPDATE The CDC Boundary Panel will meet on 3 July online. Cllrs Charlesworth and Longman (in his capacity as Chair of ELPC) to attend and speak if requested by the panel. The meeting will be streamed live for any member of the public to attend. The CDC officers have recommended that a Community Governance Review be conducted into the proposed merger of the parishes.				Cllrs Longman and Charlesworth will attend the meeting.	
76/26 AGENDA ITEM 12: FINANCE i) Payments made or received since last meeting.				Clerk to forward accounts to councillors	
EXPENDITURE	DETAIL	DATE (TO BE PAID)	AMOUNT	Clerk to check CIL balance expiry. Clerk to respond to the food bank to decline.	
JFS Contracting	Graffham Recreation Ground works	11/05/26	£5290.32		
SLCC	Clerk CiLCA registration	20/05/26	£495.00		
Clerk's Salary	May 2026	01/06/26	£415.62		
Expenses	Printer Ink & Postage Stamps				
Norwood Contractors	Garden Maintenance	01/06/26	£180.00		
HMRC	Tax & NI	01/06/26	£357.77		
Gallagher	Parish Council Insurance	01/06/26	£1345.80		
Roger Gunn Garden	Tractor Service	01/06/26	£598.57		
Smithe & Co Ltd	Internal Audit	10/06/26	£213.41		
Parish Online	Website Hosting	10/06/26	£432.00		
JB Harper	Toilet Restoration	11/06/26	£990.00		
JFS Contracting	Graffham Rec	16/06/26	£336.00		
JFS Contracting	Graffham Rec	16/06/26	£1122.00		
Norwood Contractors	Garden Maintenance	30/06/26	£180.00		
Clerk's Salary	June 2026	30/06/26	£415.82		
A Harte	Printer Ink	30/06/26	£42.40		
A Harte	Postage Stamps	30/06/26	£14.40		
INCOME	DETAIL	DATE PAID	AMOUNT		
Graffham Rec	Graffham Recreation Ground	05/05/2026	£4408.60		
Graffham Rec	Graffham Recreation Ground	28/05/2026	£498.80		
Graffham Infant School	Toilet restoration contribution	11/06/2026	£400.00		
Graffham Rec	Graffham Recreation Ground	15/06/2026	£280.00		
Graffham Rec	Graffham Recreation Ground	15/06/2026	£935.00		
HMRC	VAT reclaim for the past 3 years	18/06/2026	£17977.97		
All above payments and receipts RATIFIED by the council.					
ii) Approve accounts to date.					
Accounts will be circulated after the meeting.					
iii) CIL balance was discussed, Cllr Charlesworth suggested the highway project would be appropriate. Clerk to check the expiry. £5206.58					

iv) KMGF grant requests from: i. The Food Bank – a request to donate again on the grounds that some Graffham residents use the food bank (last donation made in December 25). Cllr Major felt that people could personally donate but did not feel that it was appropriate for the Parish Council or KMGF to donate. It was felt that it was not transparent enough where the money would be going. ii. Graffham School – a request to donate again to support assisted learning needs. Length of commitment discussed and also the students that are in need. A majority agreed to donate £2500. iii. Selham Churchyard (From GPC not KMGF). GPC has in the past given a grant to Selham church for churchyard maintenance. They have requested that this be reinstated (£300 a year). The council RESOLVED to donate £2500 from KMGF to Graffham School and £300 from Parish Council VAT reclaim reserves for Selham Churchyard. v) Car park extension grant The options for grants were explained, also the suggested surface. Cllr Major questioned the drainage. It was resolved to apply for the 50% grant. vi) Re- tender the garden maintenance contract This was not discussed.	Cllr Bracey suggested discussing the hardship fund with Vivien. Cllr Charlesworth will contact her. Clerk to make payments. Clerk to investigate the need for planning permission and apply for the grant.	
77/26 AGENDA ITEM 13: PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS To consider the Council's observations on the SDNP planning applications made since last meeting: No Applications to discuss. To note decisions made on planning applications decided since the last meeting: SDNP/25/04998/HOUS The Folly Graffham Common Road Graffham West Sussex GU28 0PT. Erection of garage with pitched dormer windows and conservation rooflights. Application in Progress SDNP/26/00022/HOUS The Folly Graffham Common Road Graffham West Sussex GU28 0PT. Replacement of existing garage and erection of two storey extensions to dwelling. Application in Progress SDNP/26/00943/HOUS Yew Cottage 1 The Street Graffham West Sussex GU28 0QA. Erection of single-storey extension. Comments required by 30 June. A no objection response was submitted. Application in progress. SDNP/26/01264/LDP 1 & 2 Firtree Cottages Graffham Common Road Graffham West Sussex GU28 0PT Internal alterations (only) to amalgamate the two adjoining semi-detached dwellings into a single dwellinghouse. Fri 01 May 2026 Planning officer was contacted and explained that this would proceed under lawful development. No comment submitted. Application Approved.		

SDNP/26/00525/HOUS Nearby Graffham Road East Lavington West Sussex GU28 0QE Dormer window to rear elevation. Covered porch canopy to side elevation. Mon 18 May 2026. The Council discussed the application and RESOLVED to support the application. Application Approved SDNP/25/03160/FUL The Lavington Stud The Drive East Lavington West Sussex GU28 0NQ Restoration and regeneration of Lavington Stud and Estate with a new environmental farming and management regime supported by development proposals on two sites comprising: Home Farm: main stud stables area and office. Demolition of C20th stable ranges and barns and the construction of a new principal Estate dwelling with pool and tennis court; renovation and alteration and change of use of traditional courtyard buildings to form 7 no. self-contained holiday lets, offices and a multifunctional space for education, Estate meeting room, and ancillary residential and tourist visitor use; retention of other buildings as existing stables and storage; and Calloways (alternative to implemented scheme SDNP/18/00938/FUL): Renovation and alteration of existing buildings to facilitate a change of use to form 5 no. dwellings; demolition of existing bungalow and replacement with one dwelling; renovation, alteration and change of use of existing equestrian buildings to enterprise units within Use Class E(g). Retention of the existing portal framed barn for agricultural storage. Application in progress. iii) Planning applications provision to restore the surrounding environment to a good state in building projects. Next time there is an application that may impact the surrounding environment this should be stated in any response.	
78/26 AGENDA ITEM 14: REPORTS i) Empire Hall Discussed in Agenda Item 8. ii) Environment iii) Highways, Byways & Footpaths Cllr Charlesworth has investigated and the water leak issue seems to be Southern Water's responsibility, so she is in contact with them about getting this sorted. Cllr Major explained the situation regarding communications with residents needing to cut back overgrowth. Cllr Barker explained that a footpath was overgrown in East Lavington, Cllr Longman will pass the issue onto ELPC. iv) The Recreation Ground and Pavillion Cllr Major requested permission to remove the brambles from the drive to the Recreation ground to allow the trees to flourish. This was agreed. v) Selham & Ambersham Nothing to report.	Cllr Charlesworth to continue to pursue the issue with Southern water Cllr Longman to report the overgrown footpath to ELPC Cllr Major to communicate with home owners and to clear the bramble by the entrance to the Rec.
79/26 AGENDA ITEM 15: AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS	

None		
80/26 AGENDA ITEM 16: Dates of Forthcoming Meetings Wednesday 9 th September 2026 (changed from 2 nd) Wednesday 4 th November 2026	Change the date of the September meeting to 9 th Sept.	

Meeting closed 2020