

Background Notes for Firsdown PC meeting July 2025

18.23 Reports

b. Parish Clerk's report

- I attended the SLCC Wilts branch meeting in May to hear a presentation on the dangers women can experience in public office both online and in real life.

51.25 Finance

c. Bank balances at 30th June – current £551.60, deposit £44,060.84

e Quotes for accounting software package. Three quotes were sought companies who provide sector specific software, only two received in time.

	Accounts package	Set up/Installation	Annual cost	Total maximum cost first year	Ongoing annual cost	
Rialtas Business Solutions	£499.00	£289.00	Intro offer £152.25 first 3 month free	£991.00	£203.00	
Scribe	£249.00	£149.00	£372.00	£770.00	£372.00	

I recommend RBS – I've used it for 9 years, and I am familiar and comfortable with it. Although the initial costs are more, the ongoing costs are less.

f. FPC SIM only mobile contract – I have taken out a Tesco's business SIM only card 12 GB data, unlimited calls and texts for £10.00 per month. This means the FPC will have its own dedicated contact number rather than using the Clerk's personal land line.

g. Update concerning the dog bin emptying contract – two quotes have been received, I have tried to identify a third contractor in the area, but none are available that will deal with dog waste. To empty 5 bins, reline and litter pick around the bin on a weekly basis July 25 to June 26:

Idverde : £2,340.00 plus VAT

Bawdens: £4,324.32 plus VAT

Cost 2024/2025 £2,405.00. There is £1,800 allocated in the 25/26 budget.

Recommend the contract is awarded to idverde – it is the cheaper of the two quotes received and will allow continuity of service.

h. Replacement of the wooden play area fencing with a metal one – the FPC has a total of £12.5k in earmarked reserves for this (estimate in 2022 £15k), but Cllr Brown would like the FPC to reconsider the decision to replace the fence.

52.25 Governance

Update of standing orders – please see attached, proposed amendments in red.

54.15 New issues raised.

b. Possible purchase of second wholly owned FPC SID, from same supplier – estimate £2400 including delivery plus VAT

c. Conversion of existing SID to solar power –

- if already configured for solar power, estimate is £394.23 plus VAT.
- If not configured, unit will need to be returned to the workshop in Derby for Elan City to do this – they collect, convert and redeliver for £1034.10 plus VAT

Winterslow Road in Porton has over 4500 vehicle movements a week, the A338/Tidworth Road even more, so it was cost effective for the IPC to convert all 3 units to solar power, as the batteries often ran down even when changed each week. (the units continue to record

the data though). It might be worth checking the number of vehicle movements recorded on Firs Road during a routine term time week.

The batteries are changed fortnightly at present, it might be worth changing them on a weekly basis, and to monitor the situation for 6 months before making a final decision.

d. The Wiltshire Council Independent Remuneration Panel has completed its report regarding an allowances scheme for city, town, and parish councils. This recommends a series of maximum basic allowances, based upon the size of a council's electorate, payable to members of city, parish, and town councils. It also recommends a scheme of travel expenses and subsistence payments.

City, town, and parish councils can agree to pay their members an allowance, known as 'parish basic allowance,' to recognise the time and effort they put into their parish duties. If a council wishes to pay a basic allowance, it should have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

There is no obligation on councils to pay such allowances or for individual councillors to accept an allowance if offered.

57.25 Ongoing matters

c. Purchase of woodland – I have chased the land agent, they have not received a response yet from the landowner.