



NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL, CRAWLEY ROAD, HORSHAM
ON THURSDAY 6th NOVEMBER 2025 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: A. Britten*, Mrs. K. Burgess*, J. Dancer*, J. Davidson (Chairman), Mrs. G. Davidson-Fernandez, Mrs. J. Gough, R. Knight, D. Mahon*, S. Raby, T. Rickett B.E.M., D. Searle, N. Simmonds, J. Smithurst, S. Torn, R. Turner and Mrs. S. Wilton (Vice-Chairman)

* denotes absence

In attendance: Sarah Norman (Clerk)

FC/71/25 Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

FC/72/25 Apologies for absence

The Council received apologies for absence from Cllrs. Burgess and Mahon.

No apologies were received from Cllrs. Britten and Dancer. Cllr. Torn was not present at the opening of the meeting but joined immediately before Agenda item 3.

Members noted the continued absence of Cllr. Britten and the Clerk confirmed that she had received no communications from Cllr. Britten within the last six months and therefore, could not provide a reason for his continued absence.

The Clerk informed Members that the relevant legislation (LGA 1972 s85(1)) stated that "*if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority*".

The last meeting attended by Cllr. Britten was on 6th February 2025 and with no reason for the absence provided, which Members could approve, it was **NOTED** and **AGREED** that he would cease to be a Member. The Clerk advised that she would publicise the vacancy with the usual Notice.

Members also received apologies from County Cllr. Baldwin together with District Cllr. Walters.

Cllr. Torn joined the meeting

FC/73/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interests.

FC/74/25 Minutes

The Minutes of the Council Meeting of the Council held on 4th September 2025 were **AGREED** and were signed by the Chairman as being a correct record.

FC/75/25 Decisions made by delegated power since 4th September 2025 for ratification

- 75.1 No Parish Council representation at the October HDC Planning Committee Meeting in respect of DC/25/0827 (Roffey Football Club, Bartholomew Way, Horsham, RH12 5JL) for which the Parish Council had offered No Objection.
- 75.2 No change to the agreed comment of No Objection to DC/25/1359 (7 Trefoil Close, Horsham, RH12 5FQ), following the submission of amended plans.
- 75.3 No Parish Council representation at the October HDC Planning Committee Meeting in respect of DC/25/0415 (Novartis, Phase 3 Parsonage Road, Horsham), for which the Parish Council had submitted no objections (with comments).
- 75.4 No change to the agreed comment of No Objection to DC/25/1303 (171 Farhalls Crescent, Horsham, RH12 4BX), following the submission of amended plans.

The above decisions were **RATIFIED**

FC/76/25 Committees and Working Parties.

The following Committee Minutes were presented to the Council:-

- 76.1 Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 23rd October 2025 including the recommendation to adopt the reviewed Financial Risk Assessment (Min. FA/33/25 refers)
- 76.2 Planning, Environment and Transport Committee Meetings held on 25th September
- 76.3 Property Committee Meeting held 9th October 2025 including recommendation to proceed with plans and quotations by Company A, totalling £21.026.40, to be funded by the "Playground EMR" - Min. PR/029/25 refers
- 76.4 Personnel Committee Meeting held 2nd October 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee Minutes as listed above be received, and all recommendations **RATIFIED**.

FC/77/25 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Cllr. Searle reported regarding the Incinerator. Qair had submitted an application for a minor amendment to the project and it was hoped that approval would follow shortly, enabling demolition work to start before the end of the year. The new build would then start in the Spring of 2026 which would last up to 3 years, including the commissioning period.

Cllrs. Knight, Raby, Searle and Wilton reported on the Councillor Surgery held at Roffey Millennium Hall on Saturday 1st November. Unfortunately, despite publicising on Noticeboards, via posters and on social media there had been no attendees which had been very disappointing. Members suggested that an outside stand - perhaps by the Co-op - would be more visible and it was noted that this would need to be in the warmer months. Cllr. Raby also suggested flyers to attract people but that this would require funding. The Clerk advised that she would look to plan something for May/June next year and bring the matter back to Council in the New Year to agree the format and publicity.

Reports from District or County Councillors

In his absence, County Cllr Andrew Baldwin had provided the following written report which was circulated to Members at the Meeting.

- i. Yesterday afternoon I had a useful meeting with the Head of Bohunt school and Andy Ekinsmyth, Head of Transport and Network Operations to discuss health and safety concerns re traffic and parking. The school buildings are in Sam's division but most of the pupils live in my division. Sam was unable to attend at the last minute. We don't have a magic wand or bags of money but Andy made some suggestions which hopefully will result in the school making 2 Community Highway scheme applications. It is a longish process. Details to follow if they have a realistic chance of being accepted, hopefully they will. One is for a pedestrian crossing to be installed just north of the roundabout where you turn right for the school into Bailey Road as you head north towards Rusper village. Once all the houses are built and occupied this will be considered to be necessary but no money from L and G as it was not part of the planning consent to provide one.
- ii. On 24 October you were copied in on the e mail re Lemmington Way which is self-explanatory. Work started on part of it last week.
- iii. Below is a summary of the latest position re Local Government Reorganisation. What I am sending is what the Chief Executive issued last Friday. The Chief Executive confirmed to me that it is fine for me to send you this.

You may have seen the headlines from Surrey this week, as the government confirmed their decision about the preferred option for LGR there. There were two options on the table, one was to divide the County into two new unitary councils, the other was to divide it into three. The first option, supported by the County Council and a couple of District & Borough councils was the one selected by MHCLG, rather than the other supported by the majority of the D&Bs in Surrey.

Whilst very important for Surrey councils, who will now move towards the new unitary structure to commence in 2027 (one year ahead of us), there are very limited messages that we can take from it in my view. Surrey's particular circumstances around debt have been well publicised, and this was cited as a reason why the financial sustainability of the new model was given particular weight in the government's deliberations. Surrey is around a third bigger than West Sussex in population terms (1.2m vs 900k), and there was no single unitary proposal on the table because they needed to have at least two councils in the county to be able to access the benefits of devolution and a mayor.

The selection does show that the government will go against the majority of councils in an area and a majority view in the public consultation, because as they have said on several occasions, the decision is about what proposal best fits the published criteria, not the one that is necessarily most popular.

Also on Tuesday we had a meeting with MHCLG officials where we were able to share our reasoning behind the selection of Option A, the single unitary for West Sussex, as our preferred option in our submission. Our District and Borough colleagues are meeting with the same team next week to give their reasoning for their choice also. In our meeting I started off by emphasising the work that we have

done together, the collaborative spirit that underpinned it, and why we thought that was important. We made the point that we viewed the shared business case as giving two viable options for unitary local government in West Sussex, one of which we thought stronger than the other, but both of which we all think are implementable, and that we stand ready to implement effectively whatever option is selected. That presentation of information and advocacy gives the best set of information to the government to make their choice.

The officials we met were able to confirm that they expect the public consultation on Local Government Reorganisation options in West Sussex to commence in late November, and to run until early January. That means our expectation of a decision to be made public around March still stands.

Cllr. Raby, in his capacity of District Councillor, reported that Water Neutrality restrictions had been paused due to a change in stance of Natural England. This meant that after years of no development, applications can now be progressed resulting in an increase in development across the country.

Cllr. Raby also updated that the Local Plan remains in limbo with its future outside the control of HDC.

FC/79/25 Report from the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) link councillor

Cllr. Gough, as Chairman of the NHCLT, gave the following report.

Thanks to a lovely sunny summer, it has been a busy holiday time for all our committee members, but we continue to follow up any possible opportunities which arise.

We would like to express our thanks to a new member who has joined us; Graham F. He has considerable experience in accountancy and has offered valuable financial support with the requirements and paperwork of the FCA.

Our thanks also go to Gema for all her work on updating our business plan documentation, which will be required for our much need grant applications.

We are beginning to work on revising and upgrading the information and look of our NHCLT website. The current site has now become very outdated, and it is extremely important that it provides up to date interesting information for all our business contacts.

Preparations are also in hand for the NHCLT member's AGM (January 27th 2026).

Invitations will be going out to all our members very soon. I know how very busy everyone is, but if you are able to attend, you would be very welcome.

We continue to explore any possible sites which may arise and are keeping a watching brief on the Novartis site, It is so important that our resident families can find appropriate, local, affordable accommodation.

Thank you once again for your continued interest and support.

FC/80/25 Chairman's Announcements

The following were **NOTED**:

- 80.1 At the last Council Meeting, the Council agreed in principle to taking on the LEAP and LAP at the development on the former Novartis site, subject to terms in the final S106 Agreement (Min. FC/68/25 refers).

HDC had now advised the following:-

"Further to your comments on this one, the applicant has stated that their intention for this site is to deliver 100% affordable housing, with the whole of the site handed over to a Registered Provider. The Registered Provider would manage and maintain all of the site, including the open space. As such, we would not be requiring the open space for this site to be offered to the Parish."

- 80.2 The Clerk had been in touch with WSCC Highways once again regarding the disused kiosk in Fitzalan Road and they have advised that they have chased the owners again to get the unit either brought back into use or removed.

- 80.3 The Quarterly S106/CIL report as at October 2025 had been received and is available by email should anyone wish to view it. The CIL report would be fed back through the CIL Working Group. With regard to the unspent S106 funds, the changes were for a total of £29,266 across various applications being allocated to Horsham North East STP Corridor Feasibility. It was noted that this allocation included a total of £8,895 that the PET Committee had identified as potentially being available towards the cost of a Community Highways Scheme (CHS) to improve the footpath between Treadcroft Drive and Bluebell Close. Further information had been requested from WSCC on the Horsham North East STP Corridor Feasibility project and the following response received: -

"Our STIP team is leading on the Horsham STP Corridors project, currently in feasibility stage - please see project details below.

The project aims to enhance sustainable transport infrastructure in Horsham, contributing to the goals outlined in the West Sussex Transport Plan (WSTP) 2022-36, which includes the Horsham Area Transport Strategy, and the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) 2014-31. The key objectives of the project are as follows:

- To identify a package of sustainable transport interventions to address existing transport issues in the Horsham area and help to mitigate the impacts of planned development;*
- To consider all modes of surface transport as part of the overall transport network and any key interactions (e.g. impacts on journey times) that could affect deliverability;*
- To articulate the case for investment in a package of sustainable transport interventions for the Horsham area using the DfT's five-case business case model;*
- To engage key stakeholders in the selection of the package and preferred options to secure buy-in;*
- To develop feasibility-level designs and cost estimates for the preferred package of interventions; and*

- To understand key risks to deliverability to inform future project and investment planning.

The proposed study should take account of the following evidence: Horsham District Transport and Development Study, April 2014[1], Horsham Strategic Infrastructure Package (SIP), Horsham Growth Deal and Horsham Town Centre Vision. While the emerging Horsham Local Plan will be considered, it is still subject to change during the examination process and will be treated with that in mind.

The WSTP and HDPF identify how transport issues should be addressed and the cumulative impact of development on the transport network should be mitigated. They place reliance on delivery of interventions in the short, medium and long term to support movement by sustainable modes of transport including:

- Active travel infrastructure;
- Bus priority measures;
- Multi-modal schemes;
- Interchange improvements (mobility hubs, bus and rail interchanges); and
- Highway improvements.”

80.4 As agreed at the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 31st July, a Working Group had been agreed to consider the potential assets in North Horsham, and the first meeting had been held on 15th October. Members were reminded to provide any comments to the working group as soon as possible.

80.5 HDC had advised that the recharge costs to the Parish Council for the Holbrook East By-Election back in July was a total of £11,775.57. The Parish Council would be invoiced for this shortly and it would be funded by the Election EMR, which currently totals £19,950.

FC/81/25 Financial Matters

81.1 Finance Report to show income, expenditure and reserves for the period 1st April 2025 to 30th September 2025

Precept (full year)	401,537
Environmental Grant	6,376
Donation for Interpretation Board	927
Total	408,840

Income to 30th September 2025

Cost Centre	Actual income	Annual Budget	Estimated income to 30 th Sept 2025*
Admin	12,036	20,000	10,000
Allotments**	1,092	1000	1,000
North Heath Hall	40,126	73,000	36,500
Holbrook Tythe Barn	18,727	46,000	23,000
Multi Court Lettings	10,995	28,000	14,000
Roffey Millennium Hall	36,738	78,000	39,000
Total	119,714	246,000	123,500

Expenditure to 30th September 2025

Cost Centre	Actual Expenditure	Annual Budget	Estimated expenditure to 30 th Sept 2025*
Admin	30,565	59,810	29,905
Grants	1,819	10,000	5,000
Burial***	3,730	7,900	3,950
Personnel	184,594	390,150	195,075
Allotments	598	1,940	970
Amenity, Recs and Open Spaces	35,919	68,100	34,050
North Heath Hall	15,142	35,980	17,990
Holbrook Tythe Barn	10,224	25,880	12,940
Roffey Millennium Hall	22,033	51,270	25,635
Total	304,624	651,030	325,515

* Total cost centre budget for 2025/26 divided by 6/12th.

** Allotment invoices are sent out annually. The full income is expected by the end of May.

*** Paid quarterly in Months 2,5,8 & 11

The Council **NOTED** the detailed Income and Expenditure showing the income and expenditure for the year to date (including a summary of the variances from the budget) as at 30th September 2025.

Income

Whilst the gap between anticipated and expected overall income had slightly reduced since the end of August and sat at 3% below the estimated budget, the situation with the halls showed an increase in the deficit to 5% between the actual and the estimated income at the end of month 6 in 2025/26. However, when compared to this time last year, the income from the halls was 5% higher but this was offset by interest received which has reduced.

Expenditure

There had been a slight reduction in the underspend which was 6% at the end of the month, compared to approx. 9% lower than anticipated at the end of month 5.

Reserves

As at 30th September 2025, remaining funds including the full year precept payment received together with General Reserves, stood at £464,822.

In addition, there continued to be Earmarked Reserves of £243,484, the same as there was at the end of month 5, as there had been no expenditure from Earmarked Reserves during September.

Summary

Income was slightly below budget, primarily due to the levels of income from both Holbrook Tythe Barn and Roffey Millennium Hall, with expenditure broadly in line with the expectation at the end of month 6.

81.2 Payment and Transfer Lists

The Council **AGREED** the Payment and Transfer lists for August 2025 (£54,204.21) and September 2025 (£55,328.83) as circulated with the Clerk's report and as published on the website.

FC/82/25

Scheme of Members' Allowance

Members **NOTED** that all those in receipt of the Members' allowance had been granted Dispensations to discuss and vote on this issue as without the Dispensation, the number of persons prohibited from participating in any

business would have been so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business (Min. FC/08/23 refers).

Having **NOTED** the Clerk's report referring to the review undertaken by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in February 2025 and considered by HDC at a Council Meeting on 24th February 2025 (Min. CO/65 refers), Members **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the Scheme of Members' Allowance for 2026/27 as circulated and furthermore, **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** an annual Members' Allowance of £637 with effect from 1st April 2026 in line with the Report of the HDC Independent Remuneration Panel (February 2025) and being 9.4% of the basic allowance for HDC Councillors.

FC/83/25 Mowbray Community Building

Having **NOTED** the Notes, including recommendations of the Working Group Meetings held on 16th April, 30th September and 29th October 2025, Members **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** unanimously :-

13.1 The Parish Council to be HDC's nominee for the Mowbray Community building and the resulting transfer of the freehold in due course

Members further **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** to submit to the developer :-

13.2 Fixtures and fittings to be provided as part of the developer agreement as per the recommendations of the Working Group

FC/84/25 Committee Memberships

Members **AGREED** the following :-

- Cllr Smithurst to be appointed to the Personnel Committee

FC/85/25 Policies

The following recommended Policies were **APPROVED** :

- 85.1 Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- 85.2 Grievance Policy and Procedures
- 85.3 Grants Policy
- 85.4 Pensions Policy
- 85.5 Allotment Rules

FC/86/25 Correspondence

The Council **NOTED** correspondence list 1 as circulated with the Agenda and list 2 issued immediately prior to the meeting, covering the period 4th September to 5th November 2025.

FC/87/25 Date of next Meeting

The date of the next scheduled Meeting was **NOTED** as 8th January 2026.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.54pm.

Signed

Date