



NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL, CRAWLEY ROAD, HORSHAM ON THURSDAY 14th MAY 2026 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: 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)
Dist. Cllr B. Walters
Insp. Neil Durkin, PCSOs Sophie Norman and Kyle Berriman (part of meeting)
One member of the public (part of meeting)

FC/01/26 Election of Chairman of the Council 2026/27

The following nominations were made :-

- i. Cllr. Davidson - Proposed by Cllr. Wilton and Seconded by Cllr. Turner

Cllr. Davidson was duly elected Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year and signed the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

FC/02/26 Election of Vice-Chairman of the Council 2026/27

The following nominations were made :-

- i. Cllr. Wilton - Proposed by Cllr. Knight and Seconded by Cllr. Gough

Cllr. Wilton was duly elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

FC/03/26 Apologies for absence

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

Members also received apologies from District Cllr. Emery

FC/04/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interests.

FC/05/26 Local Policing Report

The Chairman welcomed Insp. Neil Durkin and PCSOs Sophie Norman and Kyle Berriman and **adjourned the meeting**, inviting them to give their report.

Neil Durkin introduced himself as the Inspector for Neighbourhood Policing in Horsham and gave an explanation of how the Neighbourhood Policing team fits into the wider Police model. It was explained that his Neighbourhood Team includes PCSOs, PCs and Sergeants and was the team that the Parish would

deal with on local issues and problems. It was stated that North Horsham is a very safe area, with low levels of crimes, and in fact Horsham was the second safest area in West Sussex. However, his role was dealing with both actual crime and the perception, or fear of crime, in equal measures.

Discussion took place regarding local issues such as an incident on Pondtail Road involving helmeted/balaclava wearing individuals on e-bikes and reckless use on the road, and in what ways can the Police deal with this type of problem.

Insp. Durkin acknowledged that this is an issue that is developing across the entire County and not just in Horsham. The most important message was that these incidents need to be reported so that a full picture can be collated. If the incidents are dangerous or involving a crime this should be done on 999 or if retrospective this can be done via 101.

It was noted that whilst crime is low, the biggest frustration for residents is anti-social behaviour and there has been a lot of work going on to try and address, this resulting in closure orders on properties (although none in North Horsham Parish). These successes have come about through the work of the Neighbourhood Policing Team supported by local residents and social housing providers, who were all thanked for their efforts.

Discussion then took place around speeding in the Parish and the emerging technology to address this, and other problems, such as not wearing a seatbelt or using a phone while driving. With regard to Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) Insp. Durkin endorsed this tool and was of the opinion that they can alter driving behaviour, together with the formation of Community Speedwatch initiatives, as these can also see results in local communities

The Chairman thanked Insp. Durkin and his team for attending and **reconvened the meeting.**

FC/06/25 Public Forum

There were no members of the public present at this point.

FC/07/25 Appointment to Council Committees and Outside Bodies

Members had received a copy of the Committee and Outside Bodies summary for the previous year, including notification of spaces and the Clerk had received no prior notification of requested changes.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** that there would be no changes with any Members wishing to take the vacancies on the Property or Finance Committees to advise the Clerk accordingly.

It was **NOTED** that the appointment of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of each Committee would still need to take place at their first meeting.

FC/08/26 Bank Signatories

In accordance with Financial Regulation 1.7, the Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, should be reviewed regularly for security and efficiency.

The following Councillors were **AGREED** as Signatories for payments by the Parish Council, with any two signatories for payment authorisation :-

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| * Cllr Joy Gough | * Cllr Simon Torn |
| * Cllr Roland Knight | * Cllr Ray Turner |
| * Cllr John Smithurst | * Cllr Sally Wilton |
| * The Clerk | * The Deputy Clerk |

FC/09/26 Minutes

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 5th March 2026 were **AGREED** and were signed by the Chairman as being a correct record.

FC/10/26 Decisions made by delegated power since 5th March 2026 for ratification

- 10.1 No change to the agreed comment of Objection to DC/25/1721 (1 Burns Close, Horsham, RH12 5PE), following the submission of amended plans.
- 10.2 No comment or objection to Horsham Boxing Club application for the release of S106 funds relating to DC/11/1011 & DC/12/0465

The decisions were **RATIFIED**.

FC/11/26 Committees and Working Parties.

The following Committee Minutes were presented to the Council:-

- 11.1 Planning, Environment and Transport Committee Meetings held on 26th February, 26th March and 30th April 2026 including the **RECOMMENDATION** to submit ACV application for land at Amberley Open Space (Min. PET/118/26 refers)
- 11.2 Property Committee Meeting held 16th April 2026 including the **RECOMMENDATION** to approve Parish Council's Health & Safety Risk Assessment (Min. PR/069/26)
- 11.3 To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 23rd April 2026 including the **RECOMMENDATION** to approve the Direct Debit/standing Order review (Min. FA/70/26 refers) - recommendations regarding AGAR to be considered under Agenda item 18

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

FC/12/26 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Cllr. Searle reported as follows :

BIFFA Brookhurstwood MBT

Food waste collections are now successfully being accepted at the reception area. The processing equipment is operating well within its design capabilities and has sufficient capacity to deal with the growing population of the district. Batteries are still being disposed of in the household bins and are causing fires which severely disrupts the MBT. In the last month there has been 3 fires.

WEINBERGER Brickworks

Manufacture of bricks stopped temporary earlier this year due to the housing market slowing down. Staff were diverted to maintenance works during this period. Manufacture recently started up again but at a slower pace. Currently

they have a stock of 18,000 bricks which it is estimated will go quickly now the housing market has picked up again. We were advised that Weinberger had submitted a planning application for the land at Station Road on the opposite side of the railway to the brickworks which has been evaluated by HDC and can be reviewed and commented upon via the Horsham District Council website, reference number **DC/26/0585**. We will be consulted on the development as the site is close to our boundary. Local residents are concerned about the junction of Station Road and the A24 to Dorking. The application details the improvements to the junction with a copy of the drawings circulated.

Members **NOTED** that this application would be considered by the PET Committee at their next meeting.

WEALDON WORKS Recycling, Recovery and Renewable Energy

Nothing to report as the next meeting will be convened on 20th May. Andrew Baldwin had intended to chair this meeting and stand down as Chairman as he no longer is a WSCC Councillor. Unfortunately, he is away and as Deputy Chairman I will chair the meeting until the newly elected Councillor can take over the role.

FC/13/26 Reports from District or County Councillors

Cllr. Raby reported on behalf of WSCC advising that the Induction process had begun for the new County Council following the election earlier in the month. Whilst there were a lot of new Councillors there was also a great deal of experience and with no outright majority for one party, discussions were ongoing regarding a coalition administration.

The new Council would result in changes, including to Highways, and there is hope that processes such as changes to speed limits and other TROs may be simplified.

Cllr. Walters reported on behalf of HDC advising that there had been a Briefing on the Examiners feedback on the draft Local Plan. It appeared that an increase in the number of homes to be provided by the Plan was being sought by the Examiner and as a result discussions are ongoing with Mowbray to see if it possible to reduce the footprint of the commercial area to allow for more homes to be included. The previously identified sites (Adversane, Billingshurst x 2 and Buck Barn) remain. There will be a briefing for Parishes but the deadline for responses was in July so the timescales are tight.

The Friday Night Lates in June will return in 2026.

The second consultation on the Local Government Reorganisation is underway with a deadline of 15th June 2026. This consultation is to gather views on the Government's proposal to modify the two unitary proposals put forward by West Sussex councils in September 2025 and proposes to remove Chichester from the option which included, Arun, Adur and Worthing Councils and put it into a unitary council with Crawley, Mid-Sussex, and Horsham.

Finally, Cllr. Walters was following up on DC/26/0094, 23 Broadwood Close, which despite the Parish Council objecting, had been approved as a Delegated Decision. There were real concerns about how building materials would access the site and any impact on HDC owned Roffey Recreation Ground.

The Chairman thanked Cllrs. Raby and Walters for their reports.

FC/14/26 Report from the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) link councillor

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

Thank you for your continued support and interest. We have continued to monitor and keep in touch with local site developments ay Mowbray, Mercer Road, Old Crawley Road and Hornbrook Farm. We Continue to attend and keep in touch with relevant organisations such as Sussex Community Housing Hub and Action in Rural Sussex (meeting to be held 23rd June). Plans are underway for the Rotary Fun Day event in Horsham Park. Our pitch has been booked; please pay us a visit. We are in the process of updating our website and we will let you know when this will be published. Our NHCLT Annual General Meeting is being planned for January 26th 2027 here at Roffey Millennium Hall. Councillors are very welcome to attend.

FC/15/26 Chairman's Announcements

- 15.1 The up-to-date S106 and CIL report was circulated to all Members via email on 15th April 2026, noting that the only change since the previous distribution was that the £7,000 relating to DC/09/2004 which was previously unallocated was now showing as being allocated for the WSCC Horsham STP. Members were reminded that this project was queried with WSCC back in October last year and the update received at that time was referenced at the Council Meeting held 6th November 2025 (Min. FC/80.3/25 refers).
- 15.2 As Members were advised by email on 29th April, as part of the Mowbray Development, and the proposal from David Lloyd for a health and leisure complex at the site, they are offering to Members of the Council, a preview session on 15th May and all Members of NHPC are invited to attend.
- 15.3 HDC has given an initial response to the Council's request to transfer ownership of the Godwin Way Car Park and Beech Road Open Space (including playground). They have now provided some information of maintenance costs and income for both assets, they are still looking into the car park legal title issues. It is therefore intended to hold a meeting of the Working Group before mid-June so that any recommendations may go to Council in July.
- 15.4 As per the email circulated to all Members on 12th May (and as referred to by Cllr. Walters in her earlier report) the second consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in Sussex has now launched. If the Council wishes to submit a response, this would need to be agreed at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council before the deadline of 15th June. Members **AGREED** that a daytime Extraordinary Meeting should be held before the deadline.

FC/16/26**Financial Matters****16.1 Finance Report to show income, expenditure and reserves for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026**

The Council **NOTED** the detailed Income and Expenditure showing the income and expenditure for the full year (including a summary of the variances from the budget) together with a summary of the Reserves, all as at 31st March 2026, as circulated with the Agenda.

16.2 Payment and Transfer Lists

The Council **AGREED** the Payment and Transfer lists for February (£23,015.37) and March 2026 (£101,257.78) as circulated with the Clerk's report and as published on the website.

16.3 Asset Register

Members **NOTED** the Asset Register, showing a total asset value of £1,451,322 at 31st March 2026, as circulated with the Agenda

FC/17/26**Internal Audit Report 2025/26 - Final**

17.1 Members **NOTED** the Internal Audit Report 2025/26 (Final) as circulated prior to the meeting, including that no issues had been identified and the recommendation from the Internal Auditor that the Council answer "Yes" to questions 1 to 8 and question 10 (with question 9 being not applicable) of the Annual Governance Statement

17.2 Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the updated Website Accessibility Statement

17.3 Members proceeded to review the effectiveness of the Internal Audit as per the circulated document with the Agenda, and following discussion **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the review.

FC/18/26**Annual Governance and Accounting Return (AGAR) 2025/26**

Members **NOTED** the Clerk's Report and the circulated AGAR form, partially completed.

18.1 The Council **NOTED** the completion of Page 3 of the AGAR by Mr. A. Beams of Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd.

18.2 Members **NOTED**, as detailed in the Clerk's Report, the Governance Procedures undertaken in 2025/26 including:-

- The review of the scope of the Internal Audit as part of the reappointment of Mulberry & Co as the Internal Auditor for a three-year period ending 2025/26 was undertaken at the Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 17th August 2023 (Min. FA/20/23)
- The receipt of the External Audit was noted at the Council Meeting held 4th September 2025 (Min. FC/62/25 refers)
- Review of the Financial Risk Assessment was undertaken at the Finance & Administration Committee Meeting held 23rd October 2025 (Min. FA/33/25 refers)
- Consideration of the Internal Audit (Interim) was undertaken by the Finance and Administration Committee held 4th December 2025 (Min. FA/47/25)

refers) with these Minutes received by Council on 8th January 2026 (Min. FC/94.1/25 refers)

- Review of the system of internal control procedures and practices was undertaken at the Council Meeting held 5th March 2026 (Min. FC/122/26 refers)
- Review and agreement of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit was undertaken under Agenda item 17.3
- The Internal Control Working Party has met 4 times during the 2025/26 year on 9th June 2025, 8th September 2025, 24th November 2025 and 23rd February 2026 with the Notes from these meetings presented to the Finance & Administration Committee
- Reviewed the Data Protection policies and procedures to ensure compliance with Assertion 10 of the Governance Statement as received by Full Council at the meeting held 5th March 2026 (Min. FC/123/26 refers). Subsequently, Breakthrough Communications completed their Compliance Health Check and Members **NOTED** the written report circulated by email prior to the meeting. The feedback from the exercise was very positive and demonstrated that the Council takes the issue of Data Protection compliance seriously. There remains some work to be done including the rewording of the Privacy Notice and therefore, a revised Notice will be presented to Council for approval in due course

The Council then considered the responses to the Statements in Section 2 of the AGAR 2025/26 (Page 4) and, having considered the Clerk's report and **NOTING** the Internal Auditors recommendations for this section, Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** answering 'Yes' to statements 1 to 8 and 10, noting that statement 9 was not applicable to the Parish Council.

Members subsequently **AGREED** that Section 1 be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

18.3 Members then moved to Section 2 - Accounting Statements for 2025/26 and following discussion it was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the Statement signed by the Clerk prior to presentation to Council.

18.4 Having agreed the Statements, Members further **RESOLVED** that these be signed by the Chairman, **NOTING** that this Section had been signed by the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer prior to presentation to Council.

18.5 Finally, Members **NOTED** the following additional information that was to be submitted with the AGAR 2025/26 :-

- i) Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31st March 2026 (*corresponding statements circulated by email*)
- ii) Explanation of the differences between Box 7 and 8 on the AGAR
- iii) Summary and detailed explanation of Significant Variances between 2024/25 and 2025/26
- iv) A breakdown of the types of reserves held between General Reserves, Earmarked Reserves and Restricted (ring fenced) reserves
- v) Additional Documents relating to Intermediate Review 2025/26 as requested by External Auditor

- vi) Copy of the Notice of Public Rights - to adopt the dates for the period from 3rd June to 14th July 2026 (inclusive) which includes the first 10 working days in July as required

18.6 Finally, Members **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the dates for the period of Electors' Rights from 3rd June to 14th July 2026 (inclusive) as shown on the circulated Notice of Public Rights.

FC/19/26 Code of Conduct Dispensation Scheme

Members **NOTED** the Clerk's report (including the draft document) and that no notification had been received from HDC regarding their previous stated position that they would deal with requests and advice in relation to dispensations on an individual basis, but they reserved the right to revisit this in the future and the Parish Council would be notified accordingly.

Members **AGREED** to **ADOPT** the unamended Scheme, with a review in May 2028, unless triggered sooner by an amendment being agreed by HDC.

FC/20/26 Insurance arrangements for 2026/27

As detailed in the Clerk's report, the paperwork for the renewal on 1st June 2026 had been received from the Council's brokers, Gallagher, and the annual premium for the year 1st June 2026 to the 31st May 2027 (including IPT and all fees) would be £16,135.79 through Hiscox Insurance Company, including index linking, which had been applied to the sums insured, and for this renewal was fixed at 5% for buildings and 3% for contents.

Members **NOTED** that the Council would be in year two of a three-year agreement ending at the 2027/28 policy year (Min. FC/19/25 refers).

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** to renew the Insurance Policy with Hiscox Insurance Company at an annual premium of £16,135.79 (inc. IPT) and furthermore, **AGREED** to continue the monthly 0% Direct Debit payment terms (admin fee waived).

FC/21/26 WSALC and NALC Subscriptions

Members **AGREED** to the subscriptions to WSALC and NALC as follows :-

WSALC Subscription	£1,865.59
NALC Subscription	£1,473.35
Total Due	£3,338.94

FC/22/26 CIL Working Group

The Notes of the meeting held 30th April 2026 had been circulated by email prior to the meeting and following discussion Members **AGREED** to the following recommendations :-

- 22.1** The £5,000 previously earmarked for outside gym equipment be released for general use
- 22.2** All primary schools in the Parish, together with 4TheYouth, be contacted to raise awareness of the availability of CIL Funding and invited to make a request for capital expenditure to be used for extra curricula/enrichment activities and projects.

FC/23/26 Local Community Governance Review

In advance of the Meeting, Members had been referred to the HDC website Consultation page and provided with a copy of the questionnaire which would be used to formulate the Council's responses.

The following comments were made :

There were anomalies to the North and South of the Parish that should be reviewed to rationalise the Parish boundary.

To the North, the vast majority of the emerging Mowbray community falls within North Horsham Parish. However, there was an area, including the Bohunt School that falls into Rusper Parish. Members wanted to ensure that there was a rational boundary for the new Mowbray Community and avoid having different Parishes for properties in different parts of the development. Members therefore agreed that the NHPC boundary should be reviewed so that all areas of the Mowbray development fall into the North Horsham Parish.

To the South, Members felt that the area to the East of Foundry Lane up to Harwood Road, geographically sat more naturally into North Horsham Parish with there sometimes being confusion about which Parish this area falls into. Therefore, it was agreed that an extension of the NHPC Boundary to include both sides of Foundry Road, down to the roundabout and then up Harwood Road to meet the NHPC existing Boundary at the Redkiln Way roundabout be considered. Whilst the current number of Councillors was appropriate for the current area, should there be any change to the South there may need to be consideration of an increase of 1.

With regards to Comptons Ward, if there are to be no changes to the Boundary to the South as referred to in Point 1, the Council agreed that the Comptons Ward was too small, and it was noted that the Ward had not been able to attract a candidate since the 2019 election. Therefore, Members suggested that this Ward be abolished and the area absorbed into Roffey South. Should there be a boundary change to the South as suggested, then the Comptons Ward could be extended to encompass the larger area.

Members **AGREED** that the above comments to submitted to HDC in response to the current Consultation.

FC/24/26 Correspondence

The Council **NOTED** correspondence list 1 as circulated with the Agenda and list 2 issued immediately prior to the meeting, covering the period 5th March to 13th May 2026.

FC/25/26 Date of next Meeting

The date of the next Meeting on 2nd July 2026 was **NOTED**.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.57pm.

Signed

Date