NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL, CRAWLEY ROAD, HORSHAM ON THURSDAY 5th NOVEMBER 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, S. Torn, R. Turner and Mrs. S. Wilton (Vice-Chairman)

* denotes absence

In attendance:
Sarah Norman (Clerk)
4 members of the public

FC/78/26 Public Forum

A resident of North Horsham spoke in respect of :

- Agenda item 12 seeking confirmation that the Council would be working in collaboration with Horsham Town Council
- Agenda item 15 asking what legal concerns had been raised to qualify using residents money for a challenge

A member of Horsham Town Community Partnership spoke in respect of :-

- Agenda item 14.2, suggesting that CIL funding could be used towards improvements to Riverside Walk
- Agenda item 15, asking whether the use of General Reserves would be better used for these improvements

A resident of North Horsham spoke in respect of :-

- Agenda item 15, referring to the evidence to support the Motion which may be viewed as relatively weak and the history of the Parish Council in legally challenging decisions

A resident of North Horsham spoke in respect of :-

- Agenda item 16, questioning the expenditure for a council vehicle now, and whether this should be a decision for the new Council.

FC/79/26 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies from Councillors. No apologies were received from Cllr. Dancer.

FC/80/26 Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Raby declared an Ordinary Interest as a member of Horsham District Council in relation to Agenda item 12.

FC/81/26 Variation of Business

In accordance with SO 10 (a) (vi), Members **AGREED** to vary the order of business and take Agenda item 14 next.

Unconfirmed

FC/82/26 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Clerk's report was **NOTED** and the following decisions **AGREED** :-

82.1 Members received the Notes of the CIL Working Group Meeting held 14th October 2026 together with the updates from the two schools who had requested funding for their projects and after discussion **AGREED** :

82.1.1 Funding of £2,000 to All Saints Primary School towards the purchase of outside tables

82.1.2 Funding of £1,994.36 to Leechpool Primary School for equipping their forest school.

82.2 Members considered the proposal from Horsham Town Community Partnership (HTCP) for funding towards the improvements of the Riverside Walk. Members **NOTED** the map as provided to the meeting (attached as Appendix 1 to these Minutes) with showed the current path (in red) which passed through housing and the proposed route (in blue) which kept to the wooded areas south of the A264. It was **NOTED** that it had been reported that the entire project would cost around £30,000.

Following discussion and having been proposed and seconded it was unanimously **AGREED** to release £7,000 of CIL Funding to HTCP for the Riverside Walk route alteration project.

FC/83/26 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 3rd September 2026 were **AGREED** and were signed by the Chairman as being a correct record.

FC/84/26 Decisions made by delegated power since 3rd September 2026 for ratification

84.1 Additional £800 for gas supply works at NHH as noted at the Property Committee Meeting held 15th October 2026 (Min. PR/037/26 refers) in accordance with FR 5.18.

Members **RESOLVED** to **RATIFY** the decisions.

FC/85/26 Committees and Working Parties

The following Committee Minutes were presented to the Council:-

85.1 Planning, Environment and Transport Committee Meetings held on 24th September 2026
85.2 Property Committee Meetings held 15th October 2026
85.3 Personnel Committee Meetings held 8th October 2026

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

FC/86/26 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Cllr. Searle provided the following reports:

Biffa Brookhurstwood Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT)

- This is to be renamed Anaerobic Digestion Resource Recovery Facility (ADRRF).
- Biffa are currently looking at accepting hard plastic for recycling.

Unconfirmed

- Landfill methane generates 1250kw of electricity which services the Depot and Brickworks.
- Grass covering the landfill has been badly affected by the summer heat but is recovering well with wildlife species increasing.
- Black bag waster has decreased since the introduction of food waste collection. Food waster generates 1500kw using one heat engine. Another engine will be commissioned soon.
- Now that food waster has been separated from black bags, the residual waste is a lot dryer which increases the risk of fires.
- Discard batteries are still causing fires at the Depot but so far, no infrastructure has been damaged. Biffa are working with other waste management companies and WSCC to try and find a solution
- HDC have recently litter picked the whole of the A264. HDC are working with WSCC to coordinate grass cutting with litter picking to avoid litter remaining in verges after grass cutting has been carried out.

Weinberger Brickworks

- Nothing to report

Wealdon Works Recycling, Recovery and Renewable Energy

- A Meeting is to be held later this month with the corresponding report to Council

Cllr. Turner reported on North of Horsham Parish Liaison Group

- There had been a larger number of stakeholders at the meeting held on 28th October and had proved a useful session.
- The development would now include the 500 allocated as part of the new Local Plan that had recently been under examination.
- The Community Building is moving forward with an intended transfer before NHPC is dissolved on 31st March.
- Work was also continuing on the possibility of the Courtyard Surgery utilising some space within the Community Building as a temporary base until the new Health Facility is completed in 2029/30.

FC/87/26 Reports from District or County Councillors

Cllr. Raby reported on behalf of WSCC that the Unitary elections had been delayed further and would now take place in 2028, alongside the Mayoral elections. District and Borough Elections will therefore be taking place in 2027. The composition of the Unitary is still unknown.

WSCC has received a “good” rating from Ofsted following a recent inspection of the Children’s services and this is the best outcome since inspections started. This was a testament to all the hard work undertaken by staff in recent years and reflects the transformation of the service which was rated as “inadequate” only 7 years ago.

Finally, WSCC are preparing for the winter with some concern that the season could be very wet. Therefore, the team are trying to get ahead with pothole repairs, and any hotspots should be reported to the relevant County Councillor as soon as possible.

Unconfirmed

FC/88/26 Report from the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) link councillor

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

We continue to work towards the possibility of a property in Horsham that we may be able to convert to some affordable homes.

I am pleased to say that we are very grateful that we have now received 2 offers of funding from 2 separate sources so that we can now proceed with a viability report on the property.

We were also able to meet with our MP, John Milne, who has now agreed to lobby Legal and General on our behalf for possible building land at Mowbray.

Thank you for your continued support.

FC/89/26 Chairman's Announcements

The following were **NOTED** :

89.1 As all Members were notified on 7th September, the Asset of Community Value (ACV) application for the land at Amberley Close was refused by HDC. The Clerk further updated that, as had been noted at the PET Committee, the Appeal for the development of a property at this site had been Dismissed.

FC/90/26 Financial Matters

90.1 Finance Report to show income, expenditure and reserves for the period 1st April 2026 to 30th September 2026

Funding at 30th September 2026

Precept (half year)	416,789
Environmental Grant	13,237
CIL Funding	8,347
Total	**438,373**

Income to 30th September 2026

Cost Centre	Actual income	Annual Budget	Estimated income to 30th Sept 2026*
Admin	10,891	20,000	10,000
Allotments**	1,134	1,150	1,150
North Heath Hall	38,107	88,000	44,000
Holbrook Tythe Barn	21,494	44,000	22,000
Multi Court Lettings	10,565	26,000	13,000
Roffey Millennium Hall	37,577	78,000	39,000
Total	**119,768**	**257,150**	**129,150**

Expenditure to 30th September 2026

Cost Centre	Actual Expenditure	Annual Budget	Estimated expenditure to 30th Sept 2026*
Admin***	22,986	63,890	31,945
Grants	4,650	12,000	6,000
Burial ****	3,730	7,900	3,950
Personnel	186,535	389,200	194,600
Allotments	883	2,005	1,003
Amenity R&OS	26,281	71,913	35,957
North Heath Hall	13,031	43,210	21,605
Holbrook Tythe Barn	12,018	32,286	16,143

Unconfirmed

Roffey Millennium Hall	21,745	57,968	28,984
Total	**291,859**	**680,372**	**340,187**

* **Total cost centre budget for 2026/27 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) together with a summary of the Reserves, all as at 30th September 2026.

Income
The income remained at around 10% lower than was budgeted at the end of Month 6 of the 2026/27 year. The income of £119,768 is almost identical to the situation at the end of month 6 in the previous 2025/26 year.

Expenditure
Expenditure at the end of month 6 was approx. 14% lower than was budgeted for and was also around 4% lower than at this point in the 2025/26 financial year.

Reserves
As at 30th September 2026 remaining funds, including the full year precept payment received together with General Reserves, stood at £520,559.

In addition, there were Earmarked Reserves of £253,096 a reduction of £7,202 at the end of the previous month due to expenditure from the R&R EMR of £819 for repairs to the automatic doors at RMH and the power adaptors for the blinds at HTB automatic blinds together with £6,200 for the gas supply works at NHH funded by the NHH Heating EMR.

Summary
There was £10,257 less income than budgeted for at the end of month 6 but this was more than offset by expenditure being £48,327 less than anticipated.

88.2 Payment and Transfer Lists
The Council **AGREED** the Payment and Transfer lists for August 2026 (£28,582.39) and September 2026 (£88,934.06) as circulated with the Clerk's report and as published on the website.

FC/89/26 Community Governance Review
Members **NOTED** the outcome of the Community Governance Review with the associated abolishment of North Horsham Parish Council with effect from 31st March 2027.

The Clerk also updated that the first meeting had been held between the Clerks of NHPC and HTC together with the deputy Monitoring Officer at HDC.

Going forward, these meetings would be held monthly to make the necessary arrangements so that the new Council can function from day one.

It had to be borne in mind that whilst the new Council will start on 1st April, no Councillors will take office until the 2nd or 3rd week of May.

Unconfirmed

As the membership of the new Council is unknown, decisions could only be taken that surround the legal, finance and governance arrangements that have to be determined before the merger takes place and up until the elections are held - as stated in the Order. Any decisions about plans, initiatives, projects etc that the new Council will undertake would have to wait until the new membership is elected and they can decide; it is not for existing members of either Council or for Officers to make plans for the future or commit resources to anything that has not been agreed by the new Council.

Matters currently under discussion include :-

- TUPE arrangements
- Banking Arrangements - have to be available from 1st April to receive payments from hirers, pay service bills, salaries etc that cannot be deferred until such time as the new Councillors have been elected.
- Insurance - needs to be in place for the new Council from 1st April.
- Staffing issues such as salary payments, pension etc have to be arranged and confirmed for 1st April.
- VAT - expert advice would be needed on this to deal with HMRC
- IT arrangements - has to be continuity from 1st April and therefore suggested that as the NHPC IT providers also supply, broadband and telephone lines to all NHPC buildings, this continues.
- It has been suggested that the RBS system currently used by NHPC for finance and bookings continue for 2027/28. Bookings have already been taken for next year and to transfer systems would need a great deal of planning, especially as there are very few that offer that of RBS.

For all of the issues, HDC have been asked to confirm that they can agree and enter into necessary agreements/contracts to facilitate the transition.

TUPE

Members were referred to the Minutes of the Personnel Committee held 8th October, at which agreement was given to vire a sum of £2,000 to a budget for HR advice regarding TUPE.

Using this budget, a meeting was held with the Parish Council's HR advisors, Worknest, on 30th October who have laid out the following :-

- Check that TUPE applies; this looks to be the case from the information we have.
- If TUPE applies there is a legal process to follow which must be followed accurately to avoid potential claims from staff.
- Confirming which employees are assigned to the activity that is transferring - ie, which employees are due to transfer. As the whole Council is being transferred with all of its activities, it would seem that all employees would transfer, unless they leave on or before the transfer date.
- Providing employee liability information (ELI) to the transferer (the new Council) which must be at least 28 days before the transfer date.
- Requesting 'proposed measures' from the new Council. These are proposed changes the new Council are aiming to make to staff terms and condition upon or post transfer. It was confirmed that all terms and conditions of employment transfer under TUPE unless measures have been proposed.

Unconfirmed

- Informing and consulting with staff - This involves electing employee reps as required and training reps before informing and consulting with reps and staff, notifying them of the transfer and consulting over the measures, then feeding back their input to the new Council including their input on proposed measures. The new Council might want to attend the consultation meetings which can be helpful with the transition.

However, some potential risks were identified :-

- There will be a period where there are no Councillors
- Who will be acting on behalf of the new Council to engage with NHPC during the TUPE process, eg who to send the ELI to and who will provide measures for consultation. Members were reminded that this process has to be conducted before the transfer has taken place i.e. before 1st April but technically, there is no transfer employer at this time. HDC have therefore been asked if they will undertake this role on behalf of the new Council. If this does not happen it is unclear how to proceed because, as stated previously, the advice is that that if TUPE applies, there is a legal process to follow.
- The suggestion was **NOTED** that NHPC have HR support for the TUPE Inform and Consult process as it's a legal process with risks. It was stated that there might be quite a lot of support required so NHPC should consider their budget for this.

Members were therefore asked if they agreed to additional funding be available to allow the Clerk to take any and all necessary advice to ensure that the TUPE regulations process is followed.

It was subsequently **AGREED** that a further £5,000 be allocated from General reserves to enable the Clerk to comply with the TUPE requirements.

FC/90/26 Scheme of Members' Allowance

Members **NOTED** that due to the dissolution of NHPC, there would be no review of the Members' Allowance by this Council and that the final Allowance to NHPC Members would be paid on 24th March 2027.

FC/92/26 Motion from Cllr. Torn (in accordance with S.O.9) : The Council agrees to authorise necessary expenditure to an approved limit, to obtain appropriate legal advice in relation the recent Community Governance Review, to assess the merits of a legal challenge to the decision to merge North Horsham Parish with Horsham Town and, if considered justified, pursue legal proceedings. Any expenditure to be funded from General Reserves

Cllr. Raby restated his DPI in this item as a Member of HDC that determined the Community Governance Review

Members discussed the proposal from Cllr. Torn.

With reference to the points raised under the Public Forum, Cllr. Torn stated that he had identified previous cases where a challenge has been made to the decision of an authority to abolish a Parish Council. Particular reference was made to a case from 2019 namely Britwell Parish Council v Slough Borough Council and Wexham Parish Council v Slough Borough Council. In these cases, the judgement concluded that Slough Borough Council had misinterpreted para

Unconfirmed

120 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews and, as a result erred in concluding that its decision to make the Order was consistent with the Guidance.

Cllr. Torn highlighted paras 50 and 59 of the guidance which state respectively that *"The views of local communities and inhabitants are of central importance"* and *"Like neighbourhoods, the feeling of local community and the wishes of local inhabitants are the primary considerations"* and that with the available results of the consultation showing that the majority of those responding from North Horsham Parish objected to the merger, that this gave some merit to the seeking of a legal opinion.

Members proceeded to discuss the issue with the following points raised :

- Query as to whether in the Britwell and Wexham cases, the Parish Councils were being abolished entirely or, as in the case of the NHPC/HTC merger, there would continue to be a Parish Council for the areas. Cllr. Torn acknowledged that the two previous cases had involved the complete abolition of the named Parish Councils but still felt there was some basis for further legal consideration.
- It was acknowledged that the Council had, as a whole, objected to the merger with concerns expressed at that time that the timetable was a little too early and that a 10-year process seemed more appropriate. However, the decision had now been made and the Council should therefore be supporting a smooth transition to the new Council more positively and highlight the skills and experience around the table that could be an asset to the new Council.
- Concerns about the speed of the transition and the motive behind the merger being acquisition of assets.
- Acknowledgment was needed that the Town Council was also being abolished and there would continue to be a newly elected Council for the entire area.
- Publication of the actual consultation results was queried and it was confirmed that these are available in the report that went to the HDC Governance Committee meeting on 28th September 2026 *(see page 31 of the report published at : https://horsham.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s35022/Appendix%202%20-%20Consultation%20Responses%20Overall%20Summary.pdf).*
- The question of cost for this initial enquiry was raised. Cllr. Torn stated that whilst firm costs are not known, an estimate of around £1,000 could be made but clearly should the case be pursued, the costs would be substantially higher.
- Whilst there is much talk of the "new Council" many of those at this meeting could form part of this new entity and it was hoped that a substantial number of the new Councillors will be from North Horsham.
- The new Council will be political.
- The concern is about the process followed rather than the outcome and confirmation is needed that the District Council proceeded in clear manner.

Members subsequently, having been proposed and seconded, **AGREED** by a majority vote that a sum of £2,000 be allocated from General Reserves to obtain an initial legal opinion on the following :-

Unconfirmed

NHPC is seeking clarification of the legality and due process undertaken by HDC in the decision to dissolve NHPC and merge to form a new single Council for Horsham, with specific regard to the weight given to the opinions of North Horsham residents.

FC/93/26 Council Vehicle

The Clerk's report was **NOTED** and in response to the points raised in the Public Forum, the Clerk stated that this was an issue that had been first brought to the Personnel Committee back in 2023 but any decision had been deferred until the Mowbray Community Building was due to be transferred to the Council's ownership, which was now imminent. The Council had been fully reliant on the goodwill of staff members to use their personal vehicle for sites visits, transportation of supplies and movement of equipment between the Council's various locations. This often resulted in a detrimental impact on their private vehicles and the situation could not continue. Should staff decide that they no longer wished to use their private vehicles, it would make it very difficult to for council functions to continue.

Members then spoke of support of this and that it was a necessary step for the staff at the current time, regardless of any merger of the Councils.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** that the Clerk investigate a lease of an electric vehicle and furthermore, nominated Cllrs. Davidson and Knight to assist in these enquiries.

The matter will then be referred back to Council in January for further consideration.

FC/94/26 Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk's report was **NOTED** and following discussion it was **AGREED** to not hold an Annual Parish Meeting before the dissolution of the Council on 31st March 2027.

FC/95/26 Policies

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** :-

95.1 Disciplinary Policy

FC/96/26 Correspondence

The Council **NOTED** correspondence list 1 as circulated with the Agenda and list 2 issued immediately prior to the meeting, covering the 3rd September to 4th November 2026.

FC/97/26 Date of next Meeting

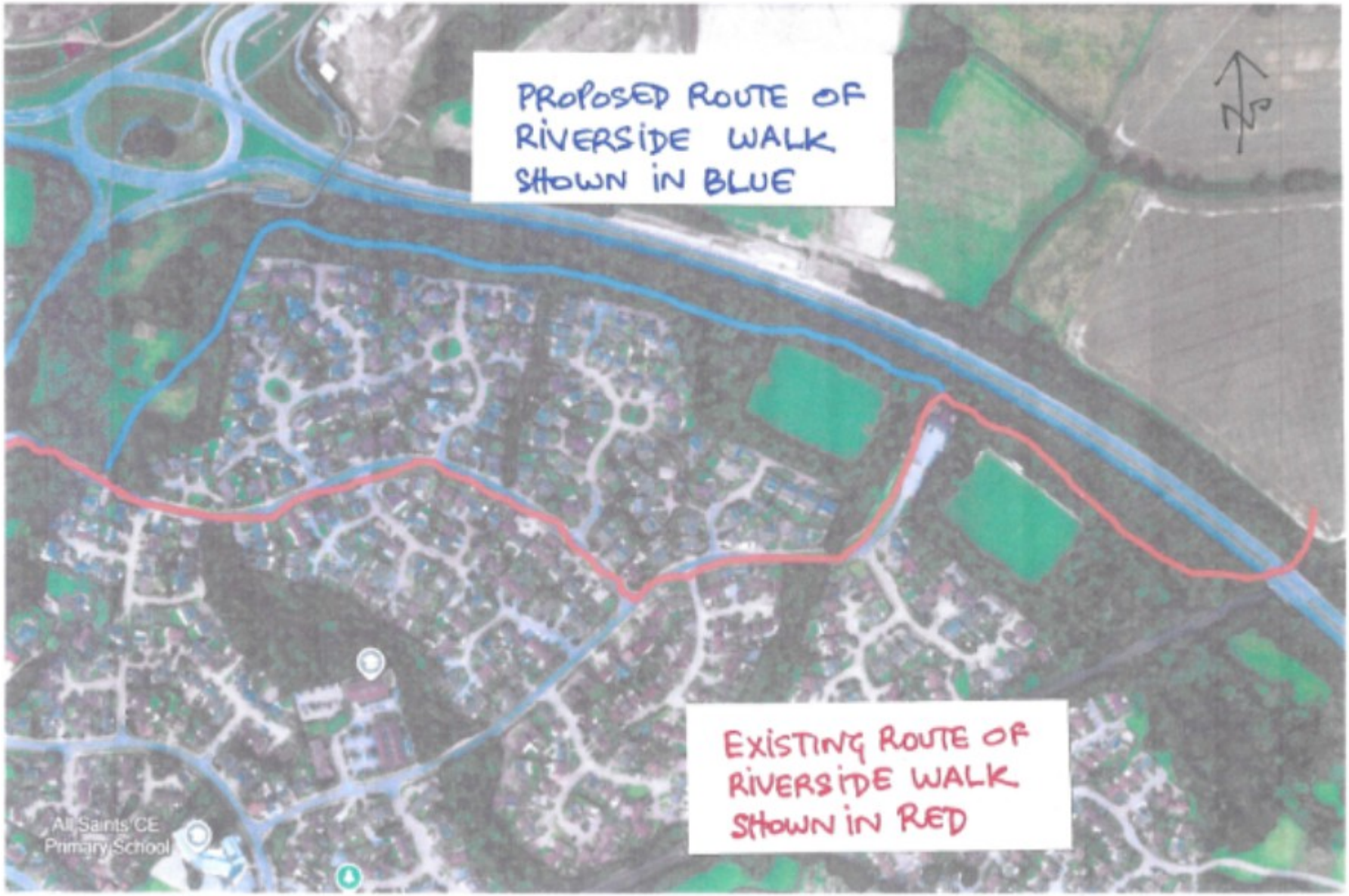
The date of the next scheduled Meeting was **NOTED** as 7th January 2027.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.44pm.

Signed …….

Date ……..

Unconfirmed


PROPOSED ROUTE OF RIVERSIDE WALK SHOWN IN BLUE
EXISTING ROUTE OF RIVERSIDE WALK SHOWN IN RED
All Saints' CE Primary School