



**Minutes of the Meeting of Billingshurst Parish Council
Wednesday 7 January 2026
7pm at the Billingshurst Centre**

Present

Cllrs Paul Berry (Chairman), Phillip Day, Sandy Duck, Craig Gale, Jeremy Harris, David Hingamp, Craig Jones, Trevor Leonard, James Marchant, Marie Montoya (from Minute 04/26), Kate Rowbottom and Doug Waller.

In attendance

G C Burt, Clerk to the Council
Cty Cllr Mrs A Jupp
Dis Cllr Mrs S Bateman
Dis Cllr J Trollope
Approximately 6 Members of the Public

01/26 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman advised that:

1. The meeting was being streamed to the internet.
2. Cllrs wishing to speak should raise their hand and speak loudly and clearly.
3. Mobile phones should either be switched off or silenced.

He:

4. Thanked all those involved in the very successful Christmas Fayre held at the Centre on 6 Dec.
5. Reminded all that Highwood will be holding a consultation at the Billingshurst Centre tomorrow between 3pm and 8pm about their aspirations for the west of Billingshurst.

02/26 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Faye Algar, Edna Bengier and Anna Rhodes, for approved reasons. On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry seconded by Cllr Craig Gale **RESOLVED** that the apologies and reasons given be accepted.

03/26 To consider any applications for co-option, to fill 1 (one) casual vacancy.

Applications for co-option had been widely advertised and two applications received: from Marie Montoya and John Bromley-Barratt. The former was in attendance and the latter unfortunately could not attend due to an injury. As a result both had been sent two questions in advance suggested by Councillors, to which they had given answers

On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller seconded by Cllr Trevor Leonard **RESOLVED** that a signed ballot be held. The Clerk distributed voting slips and Cllrs were asked to write the name of their preferred candidate and initial it. The Clerk advised that votes were as follows:

Marie Montoya	7
John Bromley-Barratt.	4

Marie Montoya was therefore duly elected, signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting table.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bromley-Barratt for his interest and hoped that he would apply for any future vacancies.

Adjournment for

04/26 Reports from:

a. County Councillor

Cty Cllr Mrs Amanda Jupp had submitted 2 reports in advance, copied to all Cllrs, attached Appendix A and then spoke in support of a single unitary authority for West Sussex. She said that the fact that WSCC spent 80% of all council tax made it more sensible for WS to be the unitary, rather than split its services, some very delicate such as child and adult social care, between an amalgamation of districts which only spent 20% of all council tax. She then answered questions on this.

b. District Councillors

Dis Cllr John Trollope had submitted a report in advance, copied to all Cllrs, attached Appendix B and took questions.

Dis Cllr Sam Bateman spoke about the lifting of the Water Neutrality bar to new housing and also the Better Billingshurst Spending Panel.

She also confirmed that HDC had advised that it was able to administer elections even with the uncertainty surrounding local government reorganisation.

[Cty Cllr Mrs Amanada Jupp explained in detail why she supported postponing elections, *inter alia*, new councillors require extensive training once elected and by the time they had go their feet under the table, their role would no longer exist.]

c. Parish Council representatives on outside bodies.

Cllr Craig Jones reported on the first meeting of the Better Billingshurst Spending Panel he attended with Cllr Craig Gale, where grants had been approved for a raft of worthy village good causes.

The Clerk was concerned at the increased use of the names of political parties in reports from County and District Councillors and asked that this be discontinued in future, as the Parish Council was not party political.

05/26 Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).

None

Resume Meeting

06/26 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 September 2025.

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2025, previously circulated, were taken as read. On the proposal of Cllr Craig Jones seconded by Cllr Doug Waller **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and signed as a correct record accordingly.

07/26 Clerk's Report

None

08/26 To consider RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. From the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 17 December 2025 to approve a revenue budget of £703,946 for 2026-27 (Minute 121/25 (b) refers). On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** to approve a revenue budget of £703,946 for 2026-27.
- ii. From the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 17 December 2025 to approve a precept of £560,338 for 2026-27 (Minute 121/25 (c) refers). On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry seconded by Cllr Craig Jones, **RESOLVED** to levy a precept £560,338 for 2026-27 upon HDC accordingly.

Note

This represents an increase on the overall precept of £26,522 = 4.97%

For an average Band D property this equates to:

£122.61 per year = £2.36 per week.

a rise of 4.97% per annum

a rise of £5.81 per annum

11.17 pence extra per week.

09/26 To receive an update on CCTV project.

The Clerk had presented a detailed report as to the status of each camera location. Some were more problematical than others. As a result, cameras were likely to be installed in phases. Cllr Jeremy Harris offered some assistance in finding a more competitive quote for the moling across Jubilee Fields for the camera at the skatepark. NOTED.

[Cllr Kate Rowbottom suggested a camera was required in the vicinity of Church Path.]

10/26 To receive an update on traffic calming project.

The Clerk had presented a written update on the traffic calming project. Village gateways and speed indicator devices were on hold pending an imminent decision by WSCC on reducing the speed limit through the High St to 20mph. NOTED.

(Cty Cllr Mrs Amanda Jupp kindly offered to chase this.)

11/26 To receive a verbal update from the Clerk on trees at Willow Drive.

The Clerk reported that further confidential advice from Counsel had been circulated to all Councillors. Officers were attempting to commission a full bat survey and also a brand new, from scratch, arboricultural/engineering report. Given the likely cost of the latter, this may well be brought to Cllrs beforehand. Members commented that they hoped the claimant would cooperate by granting land access etc as part of such work. NOTED

12/26 To consider a response to proposals for local government reorganisation in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove, and West Sussex. Link to consultation previously sent to all Councillors.

Members discussed briefly the options available and whether the Council should comment.

Cllr Paul Berry proposed, seconded by Cllr Craig Jones the creation of a single unitary authority for West Sussex. Upon being put to a vote, the motion was LOST.

On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller seconded by Cllr Marie Montoya **RESOLVED** not to comment.

13/26 To review appointments to Committees and outside bodies etc.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry seconded by Cllr Craig Jones **RESOLVED** the revisions as set out in Appendix C.

14/26 To receive Minutes as approved by the following Committees:

- a) On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller seconded by Cllr David Hingamp **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee of 4 November and 2 December 2025 be received.
- b) On the proposal of Cllr Phillip Day, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the F&GP Committee of 29 October 2025 be received.
- c) On the proposal of Cllr Craig Gale seconded by Cllr Phillip Day **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Property Committee of 8 October 2025 be received.

15/26 Neighbourhood Wardens - to receive Wardens' Report for October and November - previously circulated. NOTED

16/26 To appoint Cllr to undertake Clerk's End of Year Review. (Standing Order 19b)

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Craig Jones, **RESOLVED** that Cllr Craig Gale undertake the Clerk's *End of Year Review*.

17/26 Date of Next Meeting – 11 March 2026.

Meeting finished at 8.10pm

APPENDIX A

County Cllr Report from Cllr Mrs Amanda Jupp

DECEMBER 2025

Highways - West Sussex County Council is inviting feedback on proposals to improve two key routes in Horsham, aiming to make every day journeys safer, quicker and more

sustainable. The proposals focus on Rusper Road (between the town centre and Mowbray) and Guildford Road (between the town centre and Broadbridge Heath), both vital routes for accessing schools, workplaces, etc

Heavy traffic on both roads causes regular congestion, noise and air pollution, affecting nearby communities and making walking, cycling and bus travel less appealing. The proposed improvements aim to ease traffic flow, improve safety for all road users and encourage more sustainable travel choices, especially for short, local journey. The council is considering a range of targeted measures, including:

- Improved crossings for pedestrians and cyclists
- Bus priority features to reduce bus delays
- Road layout changes to reduce congestion and improve safety
- A 'Dutch' style roundabout with a segregated cycle track and pedestrian priority over other road users at crossing points

You can view the plans and complete the online survey at: <https://yourvoice.westsussex.gov.uk/horsham-transport>.

WSCC are now into the felling season and ash dieback tree removal works are underway. Scheduled works will be taking place at the following locations:

- A264 Five Oaks
- A22 Lewes Road, East Grinstead
- A2037 Henfield/Small Dole

Traffic management will be in place whilst essential works are undertaken to the ash trees positioned along the highways edge that have succumbed to ash dieback disease. Natural regeneration will take place over the coming year. **Private landowners** should look to have any remedial works to ash trees undertaken during the winter months, check for tree preservation orders, check for conservation areas and check whether there is a requirement for a felling licence. For more information on ash dieback visit our webpage @ [Ash dieback - West Sussex County Council](#)

Parish Briefings with Highways and Volker Highways – Parish Clerks and Chairmen are invited to two briefings designed to strengthen collaboration and resilience across communities on 17th December. The first, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2025 from 9.00 to 10.00 followed by Social Value from 10.00 to 11.00.

[Join the meeting here](#)

Meeting ID: 347 927 533 999 87

Passcode: xw2g6K2Z

West Sussex County Council's Public Health is inviting local organisations to apply for one-off grants of up to £5,000 to support mental health and help reduce the risk of suicide in adults. Applications open on 9 December 2025 and close at 23:59 on 12 January 2026.

We are looking for community-based projects that help people connect and find support. For example, wellbeing activities run through sports clubs, peer groups such as walking groups, community sessions like football or gardening, and training for community leaders to recognise distress and signpost to help. These grants are designed to strengthen community-led projects that meet people where they are.

West Sussex County Council, East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council have launched the [Get Sussex Working Plan](#) – a bold strategy to boost employment, tackle inequalities and build a thriving local economy.

The plan, which responds to the government's Get Britain Working white paper, has been welcomed by The Right Honourable Pat McFadden MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. The initiative has been co-designed by a partnership comprising the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Sussex Chamber of Commerce.

West Sussex County Council and its Fire & Rescue Service have both become White Ribbon UK accredited employers to show their commitment to ending violence against women and girls. Councillors and county council officers are being encouraged to take the White Ribbon promise to 'never use, excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women', and work is underway to create a three year action plan.

We want every resident in West Sussex to have the skills, confidence and access they need to get online and stay connected. The [Digital Inclusion, Access and Safety Partnership](#) brings together organisations across the county to tackle digital exclusion. Through this partnership, residents can access:

[Digital support](#) - use our interactive map to find help with skills, data, devices, and free Wi-Fi.

[Devices and data](#) - information on where to get low-cost digital devices, data plans, and affordable broadband.

[Digital skills and safety](#) - practical tools and guidance to help you build digital confidence and stay safe online.

Mental health questionnaire 2025 for young people

We are asking young people to complete our Mental Health questionnaire which is focussing on:

Transitions – from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to adult services (or those who age out while waiting)

Prevention – what helps young people stay mentally well before reaching crisis

Please encourage young people to complete the short, open-ended, youth-friendly survey online which will help the County Council hear young people's views on our mental health services. Contact toby.wilson@westsussex.gov.uk for further information.

JANUARY 2026

You may be interested in the latest update on the situation on the A29 at Church Hill, Pulborough:

West Sussex County Council remains committed to resolving the ongoing situation with the A29, Church Hill in Pulborough following a landslide in late December 2022. We will continue to work towards reaching a resolution which will be to the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors across Pulborough. The landslide occurred on the steep embankments situated at the narrowest part of the A29. These embankments are in private ownership and the council does not have legal right to enter or carry out work required on this private land without the permission of the owners.

Shortly after the landslide, geo-technical experts assessed the embankments and advised that due to the established instability of the land on both sides, it was not safe to fully reopen the road to vehicles and pedestrians. We continue to regularly monitor the site to ensure it remains safe for the current use arrangements.

Since the initial incident we have engaged in regular discussions with the landowners. However, when we were not able to reach an agreement with them as quickly as we had hoped, we installed traffic lights and concrete blocks to allow safe single-file traffic in April 2023. The private ownership of the embankments is still the main challenge the council faces when attempting to achieve a long-term solution. Legal options to address the lack of an agreed solution are limited and the statutory notices served on the landowners to allow work on the embankments have been appealed by them and referred to the magistrates' court system which is suffering from lengthy delays. Whilst we have not made as much progress as we were hoping this year, there is the prospect of some being made with a court hearing having been set for January 2026. If this route to have the planned works approved through the courts does not provide the much-needed solution in a timely way, the County Council will keep other legal routes under active consideration.

We appreciate that the ongoing delay in resolving the situation has caused frustration locally, and we will keep focussed on exploring all options to reach a resolution, including engaging with the landowners if they are open to further discussion. We will also continue to keep residents and stakeholders informed of any progress.

For your information, the Government has launched an open Call for Evidence to inform a major new Young People and Work report, commissioned in November 2025 and led by the Rt Hon Alan Milburn. The review will examine the sharp rise in the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), with a particular focus on disabled young people and those with health conditions. Its findings will shape future policy responses aimed at improving access to good work, education and training.

Why This Matters - around one million young people aged 16–24 are now NEET — approximately one in eight. Many are economically inactive, meaning they are not currently looking for or able to start work, and evidence shows a strong link with health and mental health conditions. For young people, the consequences can be long-lasting: reduced confidence, missed opportunities and significantly lower lifetime earnings. Addressing this challenge requires looking beyond education alone, to consider the roles

of employers, health services, benefits systems, communities and place.

A Vital Opportunity for Rural Voices - rural areas face distinct challenges that can affect young people's ability to access education, training and employment — including transport availability, distance to services, digital connectivity, employer density and access to specialist support. This Call for Evidence is a key opportunity to ensure that rural experiences and realities are fully reflected in national policy thinking.

Who Should Contribute? - the Call for Evidence is open to anyone with relevant insight or lived experience, including:

- Young people with experience of being NEET
- Disabled young people and those with health conditions
- Parents and carers
- Employers
- Frontline services supporting young people
- Trade unions
- Academics and think-tanks
- Education, employment, health and careers providers

What Questions Are Being Asked? - the review is seeking evidence to help answer two core questions:

1. What is stopping more young people from participating in employment, education or training?
2. What would make the biggest difference in supporting more young people to participate?

Evidence is particularly welcome on issues such as:

- Changes in the labour market and nature of work
- Young people's aspirations and employer expectations
- Mental health and neurodevelopmental trends
- Skills mismatches
- Benefits and employment support systems
- Transitions between education, health, employment and welfare
- Childhood experiences
- Community and place-based factors

How To Submit Evidence Email: youngpeopleandwork.report@dwp.gov.uk

Deadline: Friday 30 January 2026

APPENDIX B

District Cllr Report from Cllr John Trollope

Billingshurst Walking Nativity

I would like to congratulate all the different Billingshurst groups that came together to host a wonderful event that seems to be growing in size year on year and thank the BPC for its financial support and also thanks to James de Savary for his allowing the use of Jengers' Car Park at no charge.

Alarm continually going off at Railway Inn

I am not sure this is an HDC matter (although it would have eventually become a noise complaint), but I got myself involved anyway when I saw discussions on the Billingshurst Facebook page about the alarm continually sounding. I went by and confirmed to myself that yeah, it was quite loud. I raised a police report and shared this on two Billingshurst FB groups and discussed with Louisa our Neighbourhood Warden. I was given a number to call by a local resident and after 8 calls, I think they finally did something but am not even sure if it was due to my efforts or a local resident who also called. But for now it's not going off.

Food waste

Billingshurst residents will receive full information on food waste collection and bin/caddy delivery during January. Rollout will take place in March/April.

Council's Business Training Programme

From Friday 5 December, local businesses from across Horsham District will be able to access an exciting new series of business training workshops, one-to-one sessions and resources, as part of the Council's Business Training Programme. Delivered by local experts, providing valuable knowledge and skills development, the programme launch has been timed to mark the week of Small Business Saturday, in celebration of Horsham District's micro and small enterprises, which make up 98% of local businesses. I did not see any workshops happening in Billingshurst but there are many in Broadbridge Heath and Horsham. A small snippet of courses:

- Business and Tax Advice 121 Support
- GDPR for Small Businesses Course
- Emergency First Aid At Work 1-Day Course
- Leveraging LinkedIn For Business Masterclass
- AI Tools: Saving Time Without Losing Personality Masterclass

Council Tax

For the coming year, the Government has reduced its Revenue Support Grant to HDC by 4.3 percent following implementation of their "Fair Funding Formula." This is the seventh largest cut out of all Councils in England and Wales. Inevitably we will need to raise the HDC Council Tax precept as a result. HDC will decide the new rate for 2026/27 at its February meeting but you can anticipate a rise close to the 3% cap. The rate would still remain the lowest across East and West Sussex.

Local Plan

The Planning Inspector informed us last year that he was minded not to accept the draft District Local Plan citing two areas of concern affecting his decision: water neutrality and insufficient co-operation with neighbouring councils to meet their housing needs. Since then, water neutrality has been revoked by Natural England, and MHCLG has announced the removal of "duty to co-operate" in the forthcoming new NPPF. HDC has therefore written to the Planning Inspector to request in these circumstances that the paused Local Plan examination be resumed. He will be meeting with HDC shortly to discuss.

Better Billingshurst Fund

The Spending Panel met in early December to discuss the community grant applications and have agreed to award a number of very worthy local causes. Applicants are currently being informed and an announcement will be shared once they have all been notified. Just before Christmas, officers issued the background evidence and a report on the feedback from the public consultation to all the Spending Panel members with the infrastructure project prioritisation meeting expected to be held in February, once all members have confirmed their availability. Positive progress is being made and I look forward to bringing you further updates as this exciting programme moves forward.

West Sussex County Council elections

WSCC has formally requested to MHCLG that County Elections due in May be postponed for a second year running. The justification given is that elections would interfere detrimentally to the Local Government Reorganisation process. However HDC (and the other districts/boroughs in West Sussex) are responsible for running these elections, not WSCC, and we have publicly announced, and written to the Minister, to say that we are fully prepared and able to run the elections as scheduled. A decision by MHCLG is expected this month.

Holocaust Memorial Day

HDC will be organising a vigil and lantern ceremony in Horsham Town Centre on the 27 January.

APPENDIX C

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL	
COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES	
2025-26	
(The Council has set the max. membership for Committees to 10 members.)	
COMMITTEES	
Planning & Environment	DW , FA , KR, DH, AR, JH, MM
Property	PB, SD, PD , EB, CG , CJ, DW, DH, JM
Finance & General Purposes	PB, PD , EB, CG , JH, CJ, TL, MM
Working Practices	DW, CG , KR, AR, CJ, SD, JM, MM
Billingshurst Centre	PB, SD, PD , EB, JH, CJ , TL
Complaints (5 members Max)	PB, SD, TL, CG
Complaints Chairman	SD
WORKING PARTIES	
Neighbourhood Plan	In abeyance
Internal Audit	PD, CG
Traffic Calming	PB, JM, TL
Sustainable Energy Efficiency	PD, CG, CJ
Mission & Vision	CG, PD, CJ, PB

***Bold** indicates Chairman/Vice Chairman*

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES	
B'hurst Sports & Recn. Assn. (BSRA) x2	CG, SD, (To ensure that two can always attend)
CPRE	DH
Friends of Station Road Gardens x1	CJ
HALC (H'ham Assn Local Councils)	PD
N'hood Warden Steering Group x2	SD, KR
Parish and Neighbourhood Climate Action Network	PD
Rural Market Towns Group (RMTG)	SD
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) W/Group + S106 meetings. This will wind-up once the BIF is operational.	CG, SD
Better Billingshurst Fund (BIF) x3 + officer.	CG, DW, CJ. (PD = RESERVE)
Trustee of Dauxwood Pre-School x1	SD
West Sussex Association Local Councils (WSALC) AGM x2	PD
Community Partnership x1	KR
Youth liasion - all matters	CG

Updated 08/01/2026