



Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Billingshurst Parish Council
Wednesday 6 May 2026
7pm at the Billingshurst Centre.

Present

Cllrs Paul Berry (Chairman), Phillip Day, Sandy Duck, Craig Gale, David Hingamp, Trevor Leonard, James Marchant, Marie Montoya, Anna Rhodes, Kate Rowbottom and Doug Waller.

In attendance

G C Burt, Clerk to the Council
Dis Cllr J Trollope

33/26 Election of Chairman

On the proposal of Cllr Craig Gale seconded by Cllr Sandy Duck **RESOLVED** that Cllr Paul Berry be elected Chairman of the Council for the forthcoming year. Cllr Paul Berry then signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

34/26 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.
4. The Centre would be offering bacon and sausage baps tomorrow morning for early voters.
5. The first Billingshurst team gained promotion to the Premier Division of the Southern Combination Football League by winning the Division One play-off final in front of over 400 spectators. It was also great news for the Billingshurst third team, who also found out over the weekend that they had gained promotion to Division One of the West Sussex League, so the season ended on a high for our local teams. Congratulations to all concerned.

35/26 Election of Vice Chairman

On the proposal of Cllr Sandy Duck seconded by Cllr Kate Rowbottom **RESOLVED** that Cllr Craig Gale be elected Vice Chairman of the Council for the forthcoming year. Cllr Craig Gale then signed the Non-Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

36/26 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Faye Algar, Edna Benger, Jeremy Harris, and Craig Jones for approved reasons. On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry seconded by Cllr Doug Waller **RESOLVED** that the apologies and reasons given be accepted. The Chairman reminded Cllrs to ensure that their apologies were in accordance with the list of approved reasons.

37/26 To Receive Declarations of Interest and consider any requests for a dispensation.

None.

38/26 Council Structure 2026-27.

a. To Review Committee Structure

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Doug Waller, **RESOLVED** accordingly.

b. To Review Committee Terms of Reference

On the proposal of Cllr Phillip Day, seconded by Cllr Marie Montoya **RESOLVED** to readopt the Committee Terms of Reference subject to the addition of the following to the Terms of Reference of the F&GP Committee:

Establish and seek to maintain an appropriate level of financial reserves to ensure financial stability, a platform for long-term planning and mitigation of the consequence of risk for the Council.

c. To Appoint *en bloc* Committees, Working Parties and representatives on outside organisations.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** accordingly, as set out in Appendix A.

d. To Appoint Chairs & Vice Chairs to Committees.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** that Chairs and Vice Chairs to Committees be appointed accordingly, as set out in Appendix A.

39/26 To refer *en bloc* the following to the Finance & General Purposes Committee:

Annual review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment; Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks; review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies; review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses; review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Philip Day, **RESOLVED** that the above be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee accordingly.

40/26 To refer *en bloc* to the Working Practices Committee:

Ongoing review of all the Council's policies, including disciplinary, freedom of information and data protection, etc.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** that the above be referred to the Working Practices Committee accordingly.

41/26 To review and readopt Standing Orders (in Members' Manual / on website).

On the proposal of Cllr Craig Gale, seconded by Cllr James Marchant, **RESOLVED** that the Standing Orders be readopted accordingly and that the Working Practices Committee be tasked with looking at two issues in more detail:

- i. Protocol for when meetings might not be quorate.
- ii. Current practice of council chair not usually also being chair of a committee.

42/26 To review and readopt Financial Regulations (In Members Handbook / on website)

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry, seconded by Cllr James Marchant, **RESOLVED** that the Financial Regulations be readopted accordingly. Cllr Phillip Day said that the Financial Regulations required further grammatical correction; Clerk and Cllr Phillip Day to liaise accordingly.

Adjournment for

43/26 Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).

None.

44/26 Reports from:

a. County Councillor

No report.

b. District Councillors

Dis Cllr Mark Baynham in tending his apologies had submitted a report in advance, copied to all Cllrs, attached Appendix B. Dis Cllr John Trollope spoke to the report, and then went on to explain why Horsham District Council had had no choice but to approve the application for approximately 100 houses to the rear of Billingshurst Trade & Business Park. Cllr Trollope as did many fellow District Councillors shared the parish's objection to the proposal. He offered to read out the Parish Council's statement at future HDC Planning Cttee should a parish councillor not be able to attend, as had been the case when this application had been considered. He said that it might be helpful to arrange for the District Council's Cabinet Member for Planning to meet with Parish Councillors to explain in more detail why HDC sometimes has to approve such applications.

c. Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

None.

Resume Meeting

45/26 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 March 2026.

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2026, previously circulated, were taken as read. On the proposal of Cllr Phillip Day seconded by Cllr Trevor Leonard **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and signed as a correct record accordingly.

46/26 Clerk's Report

None.

47/26 To consider making a response to the Horsham District Council Community Governance Review.

On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry seconded by Cllr Trevor Leonard **RESOLVED** to make no comment.

48/26 To receive an update on CCTV installation.

The Clerk had submitted a detailed report setting out the status at each proposed camera location. Some cameras were in place but were not yet live. Others were taking much longer due to complications with poles, power supplies and third-party permissions. **NOTED.**

49/26 To receive Minutes as approved by the following Committees:

- a) On the proposal of Cllr Doug Waller seconded by Cllr Anna Rhodes, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee of 3 March and 7 April 2026 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 25 February & 25 March 2026 be received.

50/26 Neighbourhood Wardens - to receive Wardens' Reports for March and April - previously circulated. **NOTED.** Cllr Doug Waller praised the work of the wardens.

51/26 To receive the minutes of the 2026 Annual Parish Meeting of Electors and to consider any matters requiring the attention of the Council - previously circulated.

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors were **NOTED.** There were no matters requiring the attention of the Council. The Clerk thanked Cllr Doug Waller for his suggestion for this year's speaker and said any suggestions for future speakers would be welcomed.

52/26 Date of Next Meeting – 1 July 2026.

53/26 Exclusion of Press & Public

On the proposal of Cllr Sandy Duck seconded by Cllr Craig Gale, **RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted (litigation), the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw.

54/26 To receive an update on Oak trees at Willow Drive.

The Clerk reported on a recent very positive meeting held between the Council, its solicitor, insurer and claims handler to discuss the situation. Whilst there was very little action or news to report, Cllrs asked that the Clerk consider some form of update on the Council's website. **NOTED**

*Meeting finished at 7.58 pm***APPENDIX A**

COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES	
2026-27	
(The Council has set the max. membership for Committees to 10 members.)	
COMMITTEES	
Planning & Environment	DW, FA , AR, KR, DH, JH, MM
Property	CG, PD , PB, SD, EB, CJ, DW, DH, JM
Finance & General Purposes	PD , CG, PB, EB, JH, CJ, TL, MM
Working Practices	MM, JM , DW, CG, KR, AR, CJ, SD, PB
Billingshurst Centre	CJ, PD , PB, SD, EB, JH, TL, MM
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) + Assistant Clerk
CPRE	DH
Friends of Station Road Gardens x1	CJ
HALC (H'ham Assn Local Councils)	SD
N'hood Warden Steering Group x2	SD, KR
Parish and Neighbourhood Climate Action Network	PD
Rural Market Towns Group (RMTG)	SD
Better Billingshurst Fund (BIF) x3 + officer.	CG, DW, CJ. (PD = RESERVE)
Trustee of Dauxwood Pre-School x1	PB
West Sussex Association Local Councils (WSALC) AGM x2	SD
Community Partnership x1	KR
Youth liasion - all matters	CG

Updated 07/05/2026

APPENDIX B

DISTRICT CLLR MARK BAYNHAM'S REPORT

Community Governance Review

Horsham District Council launched a Community Governance Review in February 2026, to consider all the parishes within the District. The review can consider one or more of the following options:

- Creating, altering, merging or abolishing parishes
- The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes and the creation of parish councils
- The electoral arrangements for parishes (for instance, the ordinary year of election, the number of councillors to be elected to the council and parish warding)
- Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes
- Other types of arrangements including parish meetings

The consultation survey opens on Saturday 9 May and closes on Monday 22 June. In July HDC Governance Committee will consider the views submitted by electors and stakeholders (including Parish Councils) and will produce draft recommendations. These recommendations will be put to a further consultation in August and September. Final recommendations will be considered by the Council in October/November. Any changes to the current arrangements across the District will take effect from April 2027.

Local Plan

Hearings by the Planning Inspectorate on the Local Plan were resumed last month. Having been previously paused, a new Inspector was appointed and over the four days of hearings heard submissions from HDC, developers and other interested parties. It was immediately apparent that the approach taken by the new inspector was much more positive than his predecessor and he dismissed most of the concerns raised previously. He stated that his aim was to reach a position of an approved Local Plan as soon as possible. Following the first hearing phase, a second phase of hearings will be held in the Autumn on final details. Changes in the Government's planning rules, and the end of water neutrality restrictions, mean that the final housing targets for HDC will rise. However this figure will be managed in line with HDC planning policy and having a Local Plan in place will provide protection from speculative development proposals, which is not the case now.