

HORAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Jackie Cottrell - Clerk

Horam Parish Council Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 12th February 2025 from 7.30pm until 9.02pm

In Attendance: Councillors Michael Cousins, Gary Brockhurst, Jennifer Howells, Graham Knight, Virginia Roberts, Jane Trott, Jonathan Webb and Ann Sadler

Also in Attendance: 1 member of the public
ESCC Cllr Bob Bowdler
The Clerk

PUBLIC SESSION: None

444/02/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Lee – Work commitments
Cllr Lane – Unwell
Cllr Webb – Absent
WDC Cllr Collins – Personal Reasons

The council RESOLVED Cllr Lee and Cllr Lane's apologies.

445/02/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

446/02/25 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING held on the 15th January 2025 to be confirmed and signed as a true record

Cllr Trott abstained from voting.

RESOLVED the minutes of the council meeting held on the 15th January 2025.

Due to ESCC Cllr Bob Bowdler's time constraints the council agreed to move the ESCC Report to the next item on the agenda.

447/02/25 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOB BOWDLER

ESCC Cllr Bowdler reported that ESCC's bid to be accepted for the governments programme for Devolution had been successful. There would be Mayor elections in 2026 and local elections would likely be postponed for 2 years and be held in 2027. He reported that ESCC had been disappointed to read WDC Cllr Usborne's article in the Village Diary which had been factually incorrect. They were hoping to clarify matters to the community with their own article in March.

The budget had been agreed. ESCC had had to make cuts of £13,000,000. There would be a £1.70 per week increase for a Band D household.

A councillor enquired about disabled access for stiles. Cllr Bowdler confirmed that any new repair to a stile would need to provide disabled access but that was the landowners responsibility.

ESCC Cllr Bowdler left the meeting at 7.41pm.

448/02/25 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS GREG COLLINS AND CORNELIE USBORNE

Noted.

449/02/25 REPORT FROM PCSO

None.

The Clerk confirmed that Andrew Smithson was the new Inspector for the Wealden Neighbourhood Policing Team. The agenda had been circulated to the Inspector and a PCSO who had previously attended a council meeting but no response had been received.

448/02/25 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- Email from resident regarding the condition of the May Garland Inn and concerns regarding the waste water from the car wash operating in the car park
- Email from resident requesting badger crossing signs and extending the 30mph speed limit to the Hedgerows development
- Email from resident suggesting potential items for the upcoming SLR meeting
- Playdale Inspection Report
- 3rd Age inspection Report
- SLCC minutes 5.8.2024
- SLCC Agenda 25.1.2025
- ESCC performance and resources update
- WDALC minutes 15.1.2025
- ESCC Highways grass cutting maps 2025/26

Signed

Chairman

- Information from the South & South East in Bloom
- Information on the Volunteer Fair at the Horam Village Hall

The Clerk to confirm the GDPR regulations surrounding circulating letters to the council which had been received from members of the public.

449/02/25 REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

The Chairman reported that he had been away from council business over the last month.

450/02/25 REPORT FROM PARISH CLERK

Noted.

The Clerk added that herself and Cllr Lane had successfully completed their SLCC appraisal training. The new APA banners and Memorial Garden sign were ready to be collected. Lastly, she reported there had been several complaints from members of the public regarding tree and shrub removal on the Cuckoo Trail where the new WDC hub was being constructed.

451/02/25 REPORT FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Noted.

452/02/25 PLANNING - Report from Councillor Graham Knight, Chairman of the Committee.

Please note that the Minutes of meetings are published independently

Cllr Knight reported that the committee had reviewed a retrospective planning application for the May Garland Inn car park which had been unanimously recommended for refusal.

453/02/25 FINANCE

(1) RECOMMENDED

- (a) **To note** the pre-works form for the WDC grant for the stair climber has been submitted
Noted.
- (b) **To note** the grant claim and post-works monitoring form for the stair climber would be submitted imminently
Noted.
- (c) **To note** the next Finance meeting would be held on Monday 24th February at 7.30pm
Noted.
- (d) **To Resolve** changes to the agreed grant award for St Wilfrid's Hospice
The Chairman clarified that St Wilfred's Hospice had contacted the council and requested permission to change some of the items to be purchased from their agreed grant award.
The council **RESOLVED** permission. The grant monitoring form would need to list each individual item purchased and receipts would need to be provided.

- (e) **To Resolve** a quotation for anti-virus software for the office computer and two laptops – existing package expires 25.3.2025

Members considered the two quotations provided.

RESOLVED to approve the quotation from Uniserve at a cost of £37.49 + VAT for 3 machines. If additional devices were added this would cost approximately £5 extra and could be done at any time during the license period.

- (2) **To Resolve** the payments listed below:

Payee Name	Account Debited	Invoice Number	Amount £
Uniserve – retrospective approval	Current Account	Annual domain fee	48.10
Staff & payroll costs	Current Account	Feb salaries & HMRC	3536.38
Horam Club Rooms	Current Account	Inv 153 – rental for January	500.00
Clerk – Zoom payment	Current Account	Inv 290280244 25.1.25 – 24.2.25	15.59
Clerk	Current Account	White paper	21.99
SEE – South East Employers	Current Account	Clerk training – minutes	172.80
Horam Village Hall	Current Account	Monthly Waste collection service dated	35.91
SLCC	Current Account	Inv219520-1 Clerk training appraisal process	36.00
SLCC	Current Account	Inv219555 – 2 Cllr Lane appraisal process	36.00
SLCC	Current Account	Inv206539-1 GDPR training	36.00
TGO Company	Current Account	Annual inspection	540.00
Agri factors	Current Account	Transport / remove / erect and dismantle Christmas tree	1,140.00
Wilhar Publications Ltd	Current Account	1 additional parish council page Village Diary	75.00

Signed

Chairman

Clerk	Current Account	Ink cartridge	17.27
Clerk – 2Oi	Current Account	Inv 7658013 Cloud micro server – monthly payment	11.99
Clerk- 2Oi	Current Account	Inv 7677311– storage upgrade	1.80
Wealden Citizen Advice	Current Account	Grant award – Resolved FC December 2024 Grant monitoring form received. Paid from CIL	650.00
Community Garden	Current Account	Grant award – Resolved FC December 2024 Grant monitoring form received. Paid from CIL	200.00
Uniserve	Current Account	Inv 36043 – additional website changes	281.40
Uniserve	Current Account	New office computer / 2 monitors and set up	1046.40
Uniserve	Current Account	Monthly charges	74.64
Nest	Current Account	Pension February	259.41
James Todd & Co	Current Account	Inv 77992 Jan payroll	34.80
The Finishing Touch	Current Account	Play park and Skate park maintenance for January	84.50
Europlants –	Community Account	Plant maintenance Feb 25– 32195	103.80

RESOLVED the payments listed above.

454/02/25 COUNCIL MEETING WITH WDC TREVOR SCOTT

13.1.To note the response letter received from Trevor Scott

Noted.

13.2.To resolve the recommendation of the Planning & Highways Committee that Cllr Knight, Billings and Lane would be the three council representatives for a meeting with Trevor Scott regarding WDC's lack of support for the Horam parish

RESOLVED Cllr's Knight, Billings and Lane to be the 3 council representatives for the meeting with WDC Trevor Scott.

455/02/25 TO CONSIDER AND RESOLVE AN OPTION FOR IMPROVING ZOOM ACCESS FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

Members considered the details of the quotation provided to improve zoom access for council meetings. It was noted very few people attended the council meetings remotely and the council needed to provide value for money for the taxpayer.

It was **AGREED** not to proceed any further with improvements until the results of the recent government consultation on remote attendance was known.

456/02/25 TO RESOLVE AN ADDITIONAL CLLR TO ATTEND FUTURE SLR MEETINGS

RESOLVED Cllr Sadler as the additional councillor to attend SLR meetings.

457/02/25 TO RESOLVE AN AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDER 3 (f) The period of time a member of the public is allowed to speak during the public participation part of the agenda

The Chairman summarised the motion to members.

The item was discussed. A further motion was considered where members of the public would need to register before midday on the day before the meeting itself in order to be able to speak during the public session. Any zoom invitations would have the same cut-off time.

Not all members were in agreement. It was noted that members of the public may have felt alienated if they were required to register to speak.

The amendment to Standing Orders was **RESOLVED**. A member of the public would have the opportunity to speak for 3 minutes on an item on the agenda which required a resolution and 2 minutes for any other items. The Clerk to add the information to future agendas.

The council did **not** agree that members of the public should be required to register with the Clerk if they wished to speak.

The member of public left the meeting at 8.06pm.

458/02/25 TO RESOLVE A SELECT CASHBACK CREDIT CARD FOR PARISH COUNCIL EXPENSES

Members noted the report which had been previously circulated. The Chairman confirmed there were no annual fees attached to the card, the council could claim back the VAT on any purchases and the card came with purchase protection insurance, card holder insurance and card protection.

RESOLVED to apply for a Barclays Select Cashback credit card.

17.2. To resolve a credit limit

Members noted that some items for the Christmas event or a new laptop could potentially cost over £500 and losing the VAT on those items would be significant. The card also protected the council against fraud. All individual transactions on the card would still feature on the monthly Full Council agenda.

RESOLVED to apply for a £1000.00 limit on the card.

459/02/25 STAFF ANNUAL LEAVE

18.1.To agree staff may carry forward up to 3 days annual leave if requested for the 2024/25 council year

The Chairman confirmed that the request was written into the staff contracts but needed the approval of council.

RESOLVED that if required staff could carry forward up to 3 days from the 2024/25 year.

460/02/25 PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

19.1.To resolve to add stiles to the Business Plan

Cllr Cousins suggested to members that this was a good use of CIL funds and would benefit many parishioners. The Clerk to investigate that repair work to stiles was within the remit of a parish council and to investigate matched funding with the landowner as an option. It was noted that grants had been offered in the past for stile maintenance. The Clerk to also contact the Ramblers requesting their help as well as inviting them to a future meeting. Maintenance of byways and bridleways was also discussed.

RESOLVED to add maintenance of parish stiles to the Business Plan.

19.2.To note progress on the business plan objectives

Members noted the previously circulated report which summarised the progress of each Business Plan objective.

The Clerk added that the new website would be ready imminently and she was in the process of obtaining quotes for the play area resurfacing.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would remove Cinder Gyll from the list of culverts to check as the access was too dangerous.

It was **AGREED** to only obtain quotes for replacement glass/plastic for the bus stop. Painting was no longer required.

461/02/25 TO NOTE THE LETTER SENT FROM THE COUNCIL TO WDC COUNCILLOR USBORNE REGARDING HER COMMENTS AND ACTIONS

Noted

- 462/02/25 APA UPDATE**
21.1.To note the Administration Assistants report
Noted.
It was **AGREED** the Clerk would approach ESCC Cllr Bob Bowdler to invite him to speak on Devolution at the APA as well as the Ramblers.
- 463/02/25 DISCUSS ITEMS THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL COULD PUBLICISE**
Skate Jam, Annual Parish Assembly, the new website and ESCC public consultation on public rights of way.
- 464/02/25 TO AGREE TO ARRANGE A MEETING WITH HIGHWAYS**
It was **AGREED** to arrange a meeting with East Sussex Highways after the impending SLR (Strengthening Local Relationships) meeting had taken place.

Members **AGREED** to complete the WDC Climate Green Paper consultation before the Draft Transport Strategy.
- 465/02/25 TO RESOLVE A RESPONSE TO WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCILS' CLIMATE GREEN PAPER**
The council completed the online consultation at the meeting. The overhead projector was used to display all the questions.
- 466/02/25 TO RESOLVE A RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY CONSULTATION**
Members **AGREED** not to complete this consultation as a council. All councillors were encouraged to complete the consultation as individuals.
- 467/02/25 INFORMATION FOR/FROM COUNCILLORS (for noting or inclusion on future agendas).**
Business Plan, ESCC Rights of Way consultation, Skate Jam.
- 468/02/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
PLANNING & HIGHWAYS on Monday 24th February 2025 at 6.30pm
PLANNING & HIGHWAYS on Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 6.30pm
FULL COUNCIL on Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 7.30pm
- 469/02/25 TO CONSIDER AND RESOLVE A QUOTATION FOR A LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY STUDY**
The council **AGREED** to defer the last item: Landscape Sensitivity Study until the March Full Council meeting as more information was required.

Signed

Chairman

To: All Members of the Parish Council: Councillors: A. Billings, Michael Cousins, Jennifer Howells, Graham Knight, Sue Lane, Virginia Roberts, Ann Sadler, Jane Trott, Jonathan Webb, Gary Brockhurst and Andrew Lee

Copy to: Councillors Greg Collins and Cornelia Usborne, District Council Ward Members for Horam and Punnetts Town and Councillor Bob Bowdler, East Sussex County Councillor & Police Community Support