

HORAM PARISH COUNCIL
The Horam Centre
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**Horam Parish Council Minutes of the Annual Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14th
May 2025 from 7.00 to 9.04pm**

In Attendance: Councillors Andy Billings, Gary Brockhurst, Jennifer Howells, Virginia Roberts, Ann Sadler, Jane Trott, Jonathan Webb and Sue Lane

Also in Attendance: 3 members of the public
WDC Cllr Collins
ESCC Bob Bowdler (arrived at 7.13pm)
The Clerk

[Councillor Billings in the Chair]

PUBLIC SESSION:

Wealden District Councillor Michael Lunn spoke regarding ITEM 11 – Report from District Councillors Greg Collins and Cornelia Osborne. He clarified to members he was a WDC District Councillor, the Chairman of Hadlow Down Parish Council and a member of the A267 Road Safety Group. He stated that some residents of Horam had contacted him raising concerns regarding the long-term absence of WDC Cllr Osborne from active WDC duties. He suggested that the 4 parishes she covered would feel the loss of only one present district councillor. WDC Cllr Greg Collins responded by stating that WDC Cllr Osborne had indeed cut back on her workload, but he had not been made aware that members of the community had been let down. The Parish Council Chairman stated that WDC Cllr Osborne had not been present at a parish council meeting for nearly a year, but WDC Cllr Greg Collins had responded promptly to any parish council queries during that time. He highlighted that the situation was not ideal in the long-term as the parish council was underrepresented.

518/05/25 TO ELECT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

Cllr Andy Billings was proposed and seconded for the position of Chairman of the Council.
A vote was taken with one abstention.

RESOLVED Cllr Andy Billings as the Chairman of the Parish Council. The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

519/05/25 TO ELECT THE VICE CHAIRMAN

Members discussed the position.
Cllr Virginia Roberts was proposed and seconded for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Council.

RESOLVED unanimously that Cllr Roberts would be the Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council.

520/05/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk reported that Cllr Andrew Lee had now resigned from the council.

Cllr Knight – prior commitment

RESOLVED apologies for Cllr Knight.

521/05/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Trott - Personal Interest – ITEM 18 – Staffing Committee Recommendations.

522/05/25 MINUTES of the Council meeting held on the 9th April 2025 to be confirmed and signed as a true record

RESOLVED the minutes of the meeting on the 9th April 2025.

523/05/25 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 30th APRIL, 1st MAY and 2nd MAY 2024– Resolution required

RESOLVED the minutes of the meetings held on the 30th April, 1st May and 2nd May 2024.

524/05/25 MINUTES OF THE APA 27th MARCH 2025 – For noting
Noted.

525/05/25 TO RECEIVE WRITTEN APPLICATIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF PARISH COUNCILLOR AND TO CO-OPT A CANDIDATE TO FILL THE EXISTING VACANCY

8.1. To receive application forms from prospective councillors

The Clerk confirmed that there were two candidates for the position. All the relevant documentation had been circulated ahead of the meeting.

8.2. Co-option Interviews

Both candidates spoke on behalf of their applications and answered questions from Members. A vote was taken, and the vote was tied. The Chairman used his casting vote.

8.3. To resolve the successful candidate

RESOLVED Daniel Johnston as the new councillor for Horam Parish Council.

8.4. The successful candidate to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Daniel Johnston signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

526/05/25 CORRESPONDANCE

Draft minutes of the SLR meeting on the 12.2.2025

Cuckmere Flood Forum agenda 28.4.2025

Cuckmere Flood Forum meeting notes 18.11.2025

High Weald Nature Community Fund information

Parish Council letter to all district councillors re Land at Discovery Way

WDALC Agenda 2.4.2025

WDALC Minutes 15.1.2025

Cllr Roberts notes from the WDALC meeting 2.4.2025

Minutes of the Horam Village Hall & Recreation Ground Trustee and Group Representative meeting 13.3.2025

Sussex Police Rural Crime Team Report

Response from the Horam Village Hall & Recreation Ground Charity regarding the parish council's letter requesting an urgent meeting

Email correspondence from member of the public regarding the licence application at the Horam Petrol Station

Email correspondence from a member of the public regarding dirty road signs, overgrown vegetation, broken steps and a request for SIDS and lighting in the Maynards Green bus shelter

Noted.

527/05/25

REPORT FROM OUTGOING CHAIRMAN

Cllr Billings summarised his previous year as Chairman of the Parish Council. He asked Members to note his disappointment at the loss of 3 three elected councillors which had resulted in the council losing it's GOPC (General Power of Competence). However there had been many achievements: a new user friendly website, a full response to the WDC Draft Local Plan consultation, every planning application had been consulted on, parish council representation at WDC Planning Committee South meetings, there had been some success when speaking against planning applications that had gone to appeal, the parish council had been instrumental in overturning one appeal on the basis of drainage, the Horam Neighbourhood Plan now Made had to be taken into account by WDC when making planning decisions, improvements had been made to a developer's plans for an approved site at the Reserve Matters stage, a new Parish Council Business Plan, an imminent HPC Emergency Plan, improved access to the Horam Centre, running two Skate Jams and taking over the Horam Christmas Fun Night and lastly registering some trees with the Woodland Trust to offer them more protection.

Cllr Billings asked Members to note he was looking forward to another busy year as Chairman.

528/05/25

REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS GREG COLLINS AND CORNELIE USBORNE

Noted.

WDC Cllr Collins verbally updated Members further by stating that Southern Water had agreed to meet with senior planning officers to discuss plans to upgrade their waste facilities starting with the Horam parish.

WDC Planning application fees had risen which had resulted in an influx of applications to beat the increased prices.

He requested the parish council contact him directly if they wished a particular planning application to be called into a committee.

The County Council elections had been cancelled.

He reported that James Partridge was now leader of the WDC.

Each WDC councillor had a budget of £10,000 to spend on local community grants and councillors would be reaching out to their communities as soon as possible. Members could combine their budgets with a maximum spend of £5,000 each.

The Community Led Infrastructure Fund had also been launched.

A new constitution had been resolved and would come into force from the 1.6.25. Planning Committee North and South had been replaced by a Major and Minor Committee. Cllr Collins stated he would be a member of the Majors Committee. Members of the public could speak at both virtually or in person.

Cllr Collins confirmed there would be clarification on what constituted a minor or major application in due course. He also confirmed there was a Community Land Trust in Horam.

He stated WDC Cllr Usborne intended to resign which would mean there would be a bi-election in due course.

One councillor expressed disappointment that the planning application for Land at Chiddingly Road had not been called into committee despite this happening previously and the parish council's objections. Lastly Cllr Collins reassured the council that if major tree works were required a developer must get a felling licence

529/05/25 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOB BOWDLER

Noted.

ESCC Cllr Bowdler added there was still not much detail on devolution and how it might affect parish councils. However, he did state there would need to be changes in the constitution and funding of parish councils in order for them to have more power in the future which was in the hands of central government. The new youth centre at Heathfield was progressing well. He asked Members to note that he was aware that previously the parish council had been interested in possibly transporting young people in Horam to the new youth centre. He suggested that HPC might be interested in attending the Heathfield Partnership Trust meetings where there is a fund for transport.

WDC Cllr Greg Collins left the meeting at 7.59pm.

530/05/25 CLERK REPORT

Noted.

The Clerk thanked Cllr Brockhurst for his hard work repairing one of the finger posts in the parish which had taken approximately 27 hours of time.

The internal audit had taken place and there were no problems that had been highlighted.

The stair climber had received its first service.

531/05/25 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT REPORT

Noted.

532/05/25 REPORT FROM PCSO

None.

533/05/25 PLANNING - Verbal report from Councillor Graham Knight, Chairman of the Committee.

Cllr Lane spoke on behalf of Cllr Knight who was unable to attend the meeting. Members noted the Planning & Highway Committee's disappointment that planning application WD/2024/2818/MRM LAND AT CHIDDINGLY ROAD had been approved by delegated authority at WDC. It had been expected, as a result of HPC's numerous objections, to be decided by Planning Committee South.

534/05/25 TO APPROVE AND ADOPT THE STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS DATED MAY 2025 FOR HORAM PARISH COUNCIL - Resolution required

Members noted that draft copies of both documents with suggested amendments had been circulated prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED unanimously to adopt the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations dated May 2025.

535/05/25 TO RESOLVE THE STAFFING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chairman of Staffing read out the staffing committee recommendations to all Members which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Trott requested clarification regarding the apologies required and noted the response from the Chairman of Staffing.

Cllr Trott questioned the lack of accounting information available for the Horam Club Rooms Charity.

A vote was taken with 3 abstentions.

RESOLVED the staffing committee recommendations. The Staffing Committee would review the situation again in 6 months from 14th May 2025 unless any apologies were received during this period.

536/05/25 TO APPROVE COMMITTEE STRUCTURES INCLUDING DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTSWITHIN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE UNDERMENTIONED COMMITTEES: - Resolutions required 19 (a) & (b)

Chairman of standing committees will not be known until the first meeting of each relevant committee

(a) PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS (seven members): to appoint members and to resolve Terms of Reference

RESOLVED Cllr Billings, Lane, Knight, Roberts, Sadler and Johnston. David Marlow resolved as a non-voting member of the Planning & Highways Committee.

RESOLVED the Terms of Reference for the Planning & Highways Committee.

(b) FINANCE (five members): to appoint members and to resolve Terms of Reference

RESOLVED Cllr Billings, Lane, Knight, Roberts and Sadler as the members of the Finance Committee.

RESOLVED the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee.

(c) STAFFING (four members): To resolve Terms of Reference.

Members noted that the Staffing Committee members would be resolved at the June Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED the Terms of Reference for the Staffing Committee

537/05/25 TO APPOINT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR 2025 TO THE FOLLOWING GROUPS – Resolutions required

Group	No of Members	2025 Members	Additional information
East Sussex Highways Liaison Group (SLR)	3	Sue Lane Graham Knight Ann Sadler	2 meetings a year In person meetings at the Horam Centre
East Sussex ALC LTD AGM	Up to 2	Graham Knight	1 annual meeting To attend, speak and vote
Cuckmere Flood Forum	Up to 2	Andy Billings David Marlow (non-voting member of the Planning & Highways Committee)	At least 2 meetings a year In person meetings
Focus / Cluster Group	2	Andy Billings Graham Knight	Focus either face-to face at the Horam Centre or Zoom meetings arranged on an ad-hoc basis Cluster – WDC Teams meetings Membership criteria Chairman of the Council Chairman of Planning
Horam Village Hall & Recreation Group Trustee and Group Representative meetings	1	Johnathan Webb	Bi-monthly meetings Meetings at the Village Hall
Horam Parish Council / Horam Village Hall Liaison Group	3	Graham Knight Sue Lane Gary Brockhurst	In person meetings at the Horam Centre 4 meetings a year
Youth Representative	1	Jenny Howells	To work alongside the Clerk
Emergency Plan Working Group	4	Andy Billings Ann Sadler Dan Johnston Jenny Howells Virginia Roberts (if required)	In person meetings at the Horam Centre

Signed

Chairman

WDALC	1	Virginia Roberts	Zoom meetings 16 th July, 17 th September and 1 st October
Christmas working group	4	Jenny Howells Dan Johnston Ann Sadler Virginia Roberts (if required)	To work alongside the Clerk and Administration Assistant

RESOLVED the above membership of working groups and council representatives.

538/05/25 TO APPROVE THE CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2025/26 - Resolution required

RESOLVED the calendar of meetings for 2025/26.

539/05/25 FINANCE:

- (1) To note the first half of the precept has been received
Noted.
- (2) To note there has not been a CIL payment received in April 2025
Noted.
- (3) To note the Internal Audit has taken place on the 8th May
Noted.
- (4) To note the date for the next finance meeting has been set for Wednesday 28th May 9.30am in the Horam Centre
Noted.
- (5) To resolve the online payments list as shown below:

Payee Name	Account Debited	Invoice Number	Amount £
Staff & payroll costs	Current Account	May salaries & HMRC	3605.38
Horam Club Rooms	Current Account	Inv 156 – rental for April	600.00
Clerk – Zoom payment	Current Account	Inv 302696851 25.4.2025-24.5.2025	15.59
Rialtas	Current Account	Inv 31845 – Annual support and maintenance licence	243.60
Zurich Insurance	Current Account	Inv 543759301 Annual insurance premium	2625.98
Team Rubicon	Current Account	Horam Skate Jam – Wednesday 16 th April	1104.00
Horam Village Hall	Current Account	Inv 1158 Monthly Waste collection service dated 1.5.2025	35.91
Wilhar Publications Ltd	Current Account	Inv 7830 – 2 additional pages advertising the work of the pc	150.00
Clerk – 2Oi	Current Account	Inv 7966982 Cloud micro server –	11.99

Signed

Chairman

		monthly payment	
Clerk- 20i	Current Account	Inv 7985085– storage upgrade	1.80
Clerk	Current Account	Black ink cartridge	19.67
Clerk	Current Account	A4 punch pockets	6.99
Clerk	Current Account	A4 plastic sleeves	7.99
1 st Horam Scout Group	Current Account	For use of the Scouts toilets for the Skate Jam	250.00
Clerk	Current Account	Plastic boxes for storage	12.00
Administrative Assistant	Current Account	Lanyard shop	8.88
Cllr Billings	Current Account	Gift for Ex Cllr Cousins – 23 years’ service to the council	21.50
Uniserve	Current Account	Inv 36551 – monthly charges -date 1.4.2025	83.04
Uniserve	Current Account	Inv 36626 – Cllr Knight setting up emails on alternative devices	44.40
Uniserve	Current Account	Inv 36734 – monthly charges-date 1.5.2025	83.04
Nest	Current Account	Pension May	261.45
James Todd & Co	Current Account	Inv 80677 May payroll	36.60
Cuckmere Flood Forum	Current Account	Community grant – Resolved at FC Dec 2024 – to be paid from the precept	60.00
Air Ambulance	Current Account	Community grant – Resolved at FC Dec 2024 – o be paid from the precept	300.00
The Finishing Touch	Current Account	Play park and Skate park maintenance for April	190.45
Malcolm Curtis	Current Account	Inv 88 – cut grass playgrounds	120.00
Malcolm Curtis	Current Account	Inv 87 – to cut parish verges	210.00
Europlants –	Community Account	Inv 32688 Plant maintenance May 25	103.80
Malcolm Curtis	Community Account	Inv 89 – cut and tidy memorial garden	60.00
Derek Tourle	Community Account	Memorial plaque	85.00

RESOLVED the payments listed above.

540/05/25 TO RESOLVE THAT THE PC WILL BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE HORAM VILLAGE HALL AND RECREATION GROUND CHARITY FOR A POSSIBLE NEW AGREEMENT FOR THE PLAYPARK, SKATE PARK AND 3RD AGE EQUIPMENT

RESOLVED the proposal above.

541/05/25 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY STUDY UPDATE

Cllr Lane reported that an update had not yet been received.

542/05/25 PARISH COUNCIL SKATE JAM

25.1. Review of the Skate Jam held on 16.4.2025

Members noted the report circulated prior to the meeting. There were no further comments.

25.2. To note the date of the summer Skate Jam 31.7.2025

Members noted and **AGREED** the date of the Summer Skate Jam. The Administration Assistant would be in charge on the day of the event.

543/05/25 BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

26.1. To note the Business Plan

Noted.

26.2. To discuss the progress on the Business Plan Objectives

The Clerk to complete a site visit with the Chairman to check the playpark resurfacing works around both of the roundabouts. It was noted that a few extra holes had been filled in free of charge.

The Clerk reported that WDC had contacted the parish council with two proposals for the Cuckoo Trail enhancements. The Clerk to arrange a meeting with WDC to discuss these further. Cllr Webb stated that he would like to be included in the discussions.

Cllr Howells would be checking the culvert she was responsible for as soon as possible. All other culverts were reported as clear.

Members noted that the Emergency Plan was the next project on the Business Plan to be completed.

The Clerk to arrange a meeting with ESCC Cllr Bob Bowdler to try and move the Stiles project forward. Members to send photographs to the Clerk of any stiles in the parish which were in a state of disrepair. Cllr Webb suggested that efforts should be made to investigate routes which East Sussex Highways were least likely to do.

Improving the routes around the Crematorium and Coxlow were discussed.

544/05/25 TO DISCUSS ITEMS THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL COULD PUBLICISE

Promoting the new parish council website e.g. advertising how to report potholes. Anti-social parking was highlighted for next month, the Skate Jam, the new play area resurfacing works, introduction of the new councillor and the resignation of Cllr Andrew Lee.

545/05/25 INFORMATION FOR/FROM COUNCILLORS (for noting or inclusion on future agendas)

Landscape Sensitivity Update, Emergency Plan, Skate Jam.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 27th May Planning & Highways

Wednesday 28th May Finance

Wednesday 11th June Planning & Highways, Full Council

546/05/25 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC BY RESOLUTION

To consider whether to exclude the Press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following items pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reasons of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

It was **Resolved** exclude Press and Public at 8.44pm.

547/05/25 UPDATE AND REVIEW ON THE COURSE OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE PARISH COUNCIL REGARDING THE GRANT PAYMENT TO THE VILLAGE HALL & RECREATION GROUND CHARITY FOR THE GAP PATHWAY
29.1. Retrospective approval that the Clerk confirmed with the Village Hall that all HVH trustees AGREED to refuse a meeting with the PC

Cllr Trott abstained from voting.

RESOLVED the retrospective approval. The Village Hall had confirmed that the decision to refuse a meeting with the parish council was a decision made by all trustees of the Village Hall.

29.2. To update and review the current PC position

Members noted that the Village Hall had refused a meeting with the parish council to clarify the total grant awards that they had received for the GAP pathway. As a result, it had not been possible to finalise if the parish council were due a refund from the Village Hall.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would seek preliminary legal advice regarding the parish council's position.

548/05/25 TO REVIEW A DONATION OF LAND

The Clerk to make arrangements for a site visit with Members to view a possible donation of land.

To: Councillors Billings, Knight, Howells, Roberts, Sadler, Lane, Webb, Brockhurst, Lee and Trott

Copies to: District Council Ward Members for Horam and Punnetts Town Collins and Usborne;
Councillor Bob Bowdler, East Sussex County Councillor; and
Megan Driscoll, Police Community Support Officer.

Signed

Chairman