

HORAM PARISH COUNCIL

The Horam Centre
3 Bank Buildings
High Street, Horam
TN21 0EH
Tel: 01435 812151

email: clerk@horamparishcouncil.gov.uk

HORAM PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20TH AUGUST 8TH FROM 7.30PM TO 9.10PM

In Attendance: Councillors Andy Billings, Graham Knight, Daniel Johnston, Jennifer Howells, Virginia Roberts, Ann Sadler, Jane Trott, Gary Brockhurst, George Poole and Jonathan Webb

Also in Attendance: 1 member of the public
WDC Cllr Gould
WDC Cllr Collins (arrived at 7.33)
ESCC Cllr Bob Bowdler
The Clerk

PUBLIC SESSION – The member of the public did not wish to speak.

610/08/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Howells - Unwell

RESOLVED Cllr Howells apologies.

611/08/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Billings – Item 12 Finance – Personal Interest - payment for new notice board

612/08/25 MINUTES

RESOLVED the minutes of the council meeting held on the 8th July 2025.

RESOLVED the minutes of the council meeting held on the 8th July 2025 under the Exclusion of Press and Public.

613/08/25 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR GREG COLLINS & DIANE GOULD

WDC Cllr Gould introduced herself as the parish's new district councillor. She reported that she was available for parishioners when needed.

WDC Cllr Collins reported that the grant award process had commenced. He had noted the parish council's Expressions of Interests that had been submitted to WDC had been well received and he was fully supportive of them. He expected they would be considered in the next few months.

614/08/25 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOB BOWDLER

ESCC Cllr Bowdler highlighted that the local MP would be in the Horam parish the following day.

There was currently a new campaign advertising the Flexibus.

He reported that the Labour government had found there to be no deprivation in East Sussex and the ESCC budget had been reduced by £18,000,000.

There was no further update on Devolution.

Wealden Works were in the final for the Ashdown Radio Charity of the Year.

One councillor reported that a 30mph speed sign in Horebeech Lane which had continued to be removed by persons unknown largely due to its location in the middle of the pavement had now been replaced by Highways again despite recommendations from HPC not to do so. The Clerk to email Cllr Bowdler with the details.

Cllr Poole to send details of an overgrown hedge to the Clerk.

615/08/25 REPORT FROM PCSO

Members noted that the PCSO had not been available for the meeting but had assured the Clerk that she would be attending the September Full Council meeting.

616/08/25 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Response Letter to the Chairman of the Village Hall & Recreation Ground Charity – validity of one parish councillors' position on the council & the corresponding responses received

A267 Road Safety Group Update

Flexibus Update

Letter to WDC Chris Bending

Email from a resident providing information to enhance Maynards Green on HPC's website

Email regarding the Safe Space Scheme

WDALC Agenda and minutes 16.7.2025, minutes 16.1.2025 plus further documentation

Wealden Clerks meeting notes 24.6.2025 with Devolution Presentation slides

HVH Agenda 17.7.2025

HVH minutes 22.5.2025

Landscape Sensitivity Report

Overview of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill 2025

Local Government Pay Award information

Letter to the Chairman & Clerk from Cllr Trott

Noted.

The Chairman answered the points raised in Cllr Trott's letter. There were no further questions.

617/08/25 REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

The Chairman reported that after correspondence between WDC and HPC, WDC have noted that the Horam Neighbourhood Plan does carry full weight in planning matters for both minor

and major applications. He stated that the NP was the most up-to-date document in the current Local Plan.

He asked Members to note that the new PCSO had held an open morning in the Horam Centre which had been successful. He clarified that he had been involved in the preparation of the parish council's stand at the Horam Fun Day which had been well attended. The public had put forward a list of possible ideas. He thanked his fellow councillors who had been part of the day.

Lastly, he spoke of his work to help prepare the Expressions of Interest submitted to WDC.

618/08/25 REPORT FROM PARISH CLERK

Noted.

The Clerk reiterated that Cllrs Register of Interest forms were **not** the responsibility of council staff but the individual councillors themselves.

619/08/25 REPORT FROM THE ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

Noted.

Members noted the considerable amount of time that the Administration Assistant spent continuing to chase ESCC Highways with outstanding issues.

ESCC Cllr Bowdler requested that a list of all outstanding issues be emailed to him, and he would investigate.

620/08/25 PLANNING - Report from Councillor Graham Knight, Chairman of the Committee.

Cllr Knight reported that two applications had been considered at the earlier Planning Meeting. A letter from the council would be written to WDC regarding the Coxlow screening application. Disappointingly the parish council were not consultees at this stage, but the Planning Committee felt strongly that comments should still be submitted regarding such a large development and felt that an Environmental Impact Assessment was a necessity. The developer had put forward plans for an additional 150 dwellings on top of the 750 dwellings included in the WDC Draft Local Plan and had extended the area to the south which could potentially involve bridging the Ghyll.

WDC Cllr Collins stated that an EIA was more concerned with adjoining areas regarding transport and infrastructure rather than the environmental impact of the actual development plot.

One councillor stated that the Ghyll had river status. If that was the case the Environment Agency would be a statutory consultee.

Another councillor stated that it was disappointing that an EIA was needed if an area was to be enhanced but not a requirement if it was to be destroyed.

The council requested that WDC Cllr Collins investigate why WDC no longer listed the statutory consultees as well as their corresponding closing date for those submissions for applications on the planning portal.

**621/08/25 FINANCE
(1) RECOMMENDED**

- (a) To **RESOLVE** the CIL Monitoring Report for the 2024-25 financial year
The Clerk confirmed that CIL money transferred to an Ear Marked Reserve cannot be added to the WDC CIL Monitoring Report.

RESOLVED the CIL Monitoring Report for 2024-25

- (b) To **Note** the local government pay award
Noted.
- (c) To **Note** the finance training update
Noted.
- (d) To **Note** the parish council credit card application and new bank account applications are ongoing
Noted.
- (e) To **Note** the bank reconciliations and management account reports for July 2025
Noted.
- (f) To **Note** budget observations – verbal update
Members noted the following observations:
- The council was four months into the financial year
 - The recent pay award had been backdated to the 1.4.2025 and added to the August staff salary payments, the HMRC August payment and to the Clerks August pension payment
 - Annual staff costs were still predicted to be under budget
 - There were no areas of budgetary concern
 - There was still a healthy budget for councillors wanting to complete any training courses
 - An invoice for the Landscape Sensitivity Report had not yet been received

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

Payee Name	Account Debited	Invoice Number	Amount £
Staff & payroll costs	Current Account	July salaries & HMRC	4517.52
Horam Club Rooms	Current Account	Inv 159 – rental for July	500.00
Clerk – Zoom payment	Current Account	Inv 314873505 25.7.2025-24.8.2025	15.59
Admin Assistant	Current Account	Colour posters S&P Printing Horam Fun Day stand	12.60
Cllr Billings	Current Account	New PC Display boards Display Boards Direct	127.97
Horam Village Hall	Current Account	Inv 1204 Monthly Waste collection service dated 1.8.2025	35.91

Signed

Chairman

Wilhar Publications Ltd	Current Account	Inv 7957 – 1 additional parish page	75.00
Image Matters	Current Account	Inv 2868 Foam board for display header	36.00
NALC	Current Account	Inv 10320888329 Cllr training – Navigating Rural Communities	39.22
Clerk – 2Oi	Current Account	Inv 8272117 Cloud micro server – monthly payment	11.99
Clerk- 2Oi	Current Account	Inv 8291992– storage upgrade	1.80
Clerk	Current Account	Replacement key for village hall bin	3.95
Clerk	Current Account	Plastic ruler	1.27
Clerk	Current Account	2 black ink cartridges	41.94
Uniserve	Current Account	Inv 37555 Spare laptop testing	88.80
Uniserve	Current Account	Inv 37492 – monthly charges 9.8.2025-8.9.2025	83.04
Uniserve	Current Account	Inv 37253 monthly charges 9.7.2025 – 8.8.2025	83.04
Nest	Current Account	Pension August	316.37
James Todd & Co	Current Account	Inv 83158 July payroll	36.60
The Finishing Touch	Current Account	July rubbish clearance	120.70
The Finishing Touch	Current Account	Memorial Garden maintenance work	200.00
Malcolm Curtis	Current Account	Inv 17 – cut grass playgrounds	120.00
Malcolm Curtis	Current Account	Inv 15 – to cut parish verges and move fingerpost	390.00
Europlants –	Community Account	Inv 333000 Plant maintenance August 25	103.80
Malcolm Curtis	Community Account	Inv 16 – cut and tidy memorial garden	30.00

RESOLVED the payments listed above.

622/08/25

TO AGREE A LIST OF THREE COUNCILLORS FOR PLAY PARK / SKATE PARK RUBBISH CLEARANCE IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PARISH COUNCIL CONTRACTOR

Page 5

HORAM – explore, discover, enjoy

Members **AGREED** that a short list of available councillors to help clear any rubbish from the play areas in an emergency would be a good idea.

Cllrs Billings, Sadler and Poole volunteered their services with Cllr Johnston available at weekends if required.

It was **AGREED** the Clerk would purchase spare litter picking equipment which would be kept at the office. Items required included: litter picking sticks, a heavy-duty dustpan and brush, a broom, gloves, heavy duty black sacks, a fluorescent bib and a spare key for the main rubbish bin at the village hall. Members would provide some of these items.

623/08/25 RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL OF HPC LETTER SENT TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE VILLAGE HALL TRUSTEES

Members noted the HPC letter which had had prior approval before being sent.

RESOLVED retrospective approval of the letter. One member voted against.

14.1. To consider any further action

The councillor in question provided written evidence to prove his validity as a councillor for Horam Parish Council which had been taken from 3 separate official sources. He requested to the council that more action should be taken.

One Member criticized the behaviour of the councillor whose validity had been questioned in the original email.

The councillor in question reported that he had received correspondence from the above member which he would like addressed at the next Full Council meeting.

The Chairman confirmed that this would be addressed at the September Full Council meeting. Another Member expressed disappointment that it appeared the sender of the original correspondence had circulated it to several different local organisations.

WDC Cllr Collins and WDC Cllr Gould left the meeting at 8.05pm.

624/08/25 HORAM PARISH COUNCIL CHRISTMAS FUN NIGHT – FRIDAY 5TH DECEMBER

15.1. To note the Christmas Fun Night update report

Noted.

The Clerk to investigate the cost of a magician to perform on the Co-op forecourt (the pc has a spare gazebo) or in the adjacent garage showroom which was weatherproof if a request to use it was granted

15.2. To resolve the Christmas Tree quotation

Members considered the quotation received.

RESOLVED the English Woodlands quotation for a 25ft high Norway Spruce Christmas tree at a cost of £425.00 including VAT.

15.3. To resolve the quotations for the installation and removal of the tree

Despite best endeavours Members only had one quote to consider which was to use the same supplier as last year at the same cost. Members noted the job had been carried out to a high standard.

RESOLVED the Agrifactors quotation to transport the 25ft Christmas tree from English Woodlands to the Co-op at a cost of £150 plus VAT and to erect and then later dismantle and remove the Christmas tree at a cost of £800 plus VAT.

625/08/25 TO RESOLVE UP TO TWO COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE WDC TOWN AND PARISH CONFERENCE 2025 ON TUESDAY 21ST OCTOBER

RESOLVED Cllrs Andy Billings and Sue Lane will be the two council representatives at the WDC Town and Parish Conference.

626/08/25 HIGH STREET BENCH UPDATE

Members discussed the options provided in the report. A new steel bench of similar design and dimensions would cost approximately £1,160.00 compared to the quote for £340.00 plus VAT for the existing bench to be repainted. The idea of a replacement recycled plastic bench was also considered but Members noted that there would be a cost to fixing the bench to the ground and a fire risk from vandalism.

RESOLVED to accept the Agrifactors quote for £340.00 plus VAT once the following information was provided in writing:

It was confirmed in writing that they were aware they were painting on top of a layer of powder coated paint and the bench is rusty.

The type of paint they intended to use.

To request how long they would be willing to guarantee their work for.

627/08/25 MEMORIAL PLAQUES UPDATE

Members noted the report and **AGREED** it was not imperative that the new plaque design/material chosen matched the existing plaques. It was **AGREED** that the existing material used to make the plaques was not up to standard due to its durability. An agreed guarantee period would need to be added to the new plaque forms for customers in the future. The council would view any reported wear to individual plaques sympathetically.

It was noted that although brass was valuable to thieves it would be securely fixed to the stone and could be cleaned to remove any tarnishing. Engraving directly onto the stone was dismissed but slate may be an option. It was **AGREED** a further update would be required once information had been obtained from the crematorium.

628/08/25 YOUTH CLUB UPDATE

Members noted the report.

The Clerk clarified that ESCC were aware of the age group the council wished to cater for and had been given a schedule of local clubs and their running times. A Tuesday night and a September start date had been tentatively suggested.

ESCC currently had staffing issues due to the new youth facility being opened in Heathfield.

The Clerk was advised to reestablish contact with them in September.

Members noted a meeting was being arranged with the Heathfield Partnership Trust to discuss funding available to transport young people from Horam to the new Heathfield youth facility.

ESCC Cllr Bowdler stated the grand opening was on the 18th September confirming it offered wonderful facilities for young people. It would also be available to hire.

One councillor confirmed that a visit for year 6 children from Maynards Green Primary School had already taken place.

The Clerk to arrange with ESCC Cllr Bowdler a site visit for the HPC councillors.

ESCC Cllr Bowdler and a member of the public left the meeting at 8.27pm.

629/08/25 TO DISCUSS ITEMS THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL COULD PUBLICISE

The donation from the Co-op towards the Christmas event, details of the new youth club if available, misleading advertising by bus companies, Coxlow screening update to include actions taken by the HPC Planning Committee, encourage public to attend council meetings, a new date for the Skate Jam.

630/08/25 REVIEW OF THE PARISH COUNCIL STAND AT THE HORAM FUN DAY

Councillors who were on the parish council stand made the following observations:

- Overall, the stand had been a success. However, the stand wasn't visible enough as it was in a tucked away position.
- 2 tables would be required next year to allow more people to gather round without blocking the displays.
- It was **AGREED** that the next years stand should be outside. Although it was noted that a good back drop would be required in the gazebo.
- A competition of some sort would be required to attract people to the stand.
- Lots of public had interest in the Coxlow Farm housing development.

631/08/25 EMERGENCY PLAN UPDATE

A new meeting had been arranged with ESCC and WDC on the 8th September to finalise the Emergency Plan.

632/08/25 SKATE JAM UPDATE

Members noted that the Skate Jam event due to be held on the Thursday 31st July had to be cancelled the day before the event due to the poor weather forecast.

Rubicon had proposed a new date of Wednesday 27th August which would still be in the school holidays. The Clerk to request the new Youth Facility advertise the event and to contact Wealden Works to see if they wish to be involved in any way.

Members **AGREED** that this would not allow enough time to publicise the new date. The Clerk to arrange a new date in the October half-term.

633/08/25 PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE**24.1. To review the progress of the Business Plan**

Noted.

It was **AGREED** that Cllrs Poole and Johnston would spend some time reviewing the website and making possible recommendations for improvements.

The Clerk to arrange an eye-catching window on the Home Page to advertise important events or news.

634/08/25 INFORMATION FOR/FROM COUNCILLORS (for noting or inclusion on future agendas).

All existing agenda items that were a work in progress.

635/08/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

PLANNING & HIGHWAYS on Tuesday 26th August 2025 at 7.30pm

PLANNING & HIGHWAYS on Wednesday 10th September 2025 at 6.45pm

FULL COUNCIL on Wednesday 10th September 2025 at 7.30pm

636/08/25 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

RESOLVED at 8.55pm to exclude the press and public.

637/08/25 DONATION OF LAND UPDATE

Members noted that there were no new updates.

638/08/25 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY REPORT UPDATE

Some alterations had been made to the preliminary report before the final draft had been circulated. A meeting had been arranged with WDC to discuss the findings of the report. Additional work may be required.

639/08/25 TO CONSIDER LEGAL ADVICE

RESOLVED the council would take legal advice regarding an existing agreement between the village hall and parish council.

640/08/25 TO NOTE EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST SUBMITTED TO WDC

Noted.

To: All Members of the Parish Council: Councillors: A. Billings, 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 Diane Gould, District Council Ward Member for Horam and Punnetts Town and Councillor Bob Bowdler, East Sussex County Councillor & Police Community Support