

HORAM PARISH COUNCIL

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

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on WEDNESDAY 21st JANUARY 2026 at 7.30pm to 9.08pm in the Horam Centre

In Attendance: Councillors Andy Billings, Graham Knight, Virginia Roberts, Dan Johnston, Jonathan Webb, Jane Trott, George Poole and Jenny Howells

Also in Attendance: WDC Cllr Diane Gould
WDC Cllr Greg Collins
ESCC Cllr Bob Bowdler
1 member of public
The Clerk

PUBLIC SESSION – None.

761/01/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Lane – family commitments
Cllr Brockhurst – work commitments
Cllr Sadler – ill health

RESOLVED the above Cllrs apologies.

762/01/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Roberts and Cllr Poole – Personal Interest – Item 10 – Horam Clubroom Trustee Report

763/01/26 MINUTES

RESOLVED the minutes of the council meeting held on the 10th December 2025.

RESOLVED the minutes of the council meeting held on the 10th December 2025 under the Exclusion of Press and Public.

764/01/26 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR GREG COLLINS & DIANE GOULD

WDC Cllr Gould reported that food waste collections would begin from 13.3.2026. The food waste would be turned into soil. All residents would receive a bin, but it was their choice if they used it.

WDC Cllr Collins reported that the district council were proposing a 0% council tax increase (for their proportion of the total council tax amount) at their Full Council meeting in February. He confirmed that Coxlow Farm was an allocated site on the last Regulation 18 consultation and the new Regulation 18 consultation was only focused on changes i.e. new allocated sites. He also confirmed that ESCC Transport were consulted only for live consultations but suggested that the parish council may wish to suggest that ESCC Transport should be consulted on the Coxlow Farm allocation.

Members requested Cllr Collins note that the new WDC Sports Hub was listed as having good links to public transport and the Cuckoo Trail, but the reality was quite different.

One councillor stated that the diversion routes for roadworks often took motorists to further road closures which was not acceptable.

765/01/26 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOB BOWDLER

ESCC Cllr Bowdler reported that the County Council were working hard to improve local bus services. He believed some delays were caused by empty double decker buses, instead of single decker buses, trying to navigate Mayfield and Rotherfield high streets. The size of the bus used was out of ESCC's control. Road closures were often the utility companies not ESCC. Delays in repair works were often caused by one team arranging the road closure but a different team completing the works and the two teams were not working together.

Central government had sliced £18,000,000 from ESCC's budget, further cuts would need to be made as a result. ESCC had the highest rate of pensioners in the country taking 75% of the overall budget.

ESCC had applied for exceptional financial support from the Government with a 10% interest rate on the loan.

No further news on the elections.

WDC Cllr Collins and Gould left the meeting at 7.48pm.

766/01/26 REPORT FROM PCSO

None received.

Members noted that the PCSO had arranged a drop in at the Horam Centre the following day for local residents.

767/01/26 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

WDC Draft "Focused" Local Plan (Regulation 18) update

FOI Request from an anonymous parishioner requesting copies of correspondence between the parish council and the village hall in relation to the HPC GAP Pathway grant award

Email highlighting a resident's concern with local businesses keeping rubbish bins permanently on the High Street giving an untidy appearance

WDC Community Sports Hub

Response letter from Steve Reed MP Secretary of State regarding overdevelopment in the parish

Provisional Tax Base 2026-27

Terms of Engagement April Skies Accounting

Gladman Meeting Notes from 24.11.2025

SLCC Members Meeting Agenda 16.1.2026

Horam Village Hall Meeting Agenda 8.1.2026 and Minutes from 11.9.2025

Noted.

The Clerk to write a letter requesting shop keepers, if possible, to store their bins at the back of their premises in an attempt to visually improve the high street. Members noted that not all shop keepers had access behind their premises.

768/01/26 REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

The Chairman verbally updated the council. He was working on the arrangements and content for the parish council public meeting in February.

The Planning Committee had written to the Director of Place at WDC urging him and all the district councillors to action the findings from the parish council's Landscape Sensitivity Study when voting on the Draft Local Plan document at their imminent Full Council meeting. WDC had received a copy of the Landscape Sensitivity Study four months previous.

He had also been working on a User Agreement for the Horam Club Rooms and measuring trees.

Cllr Billings updated ESCC Cllr Bowdler regarding the parish council's proposed improvements to the unofficial footpath in Chiddingly Road. A follow up meeting had been arranged with WDC.

769/01/26 REPORT FROM PARISH CLERK

Noted.

The Clerk to arrange a stair climber training session.

770/01/26 TRUSTEE REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL REP FOR THE HORAM CLUB ROOMS CHARITY

Cllr Poole verbally updated Members. He reported that there had not been any meetings. He thanked Cllr Billings for his work on the new User Agreement.

771/01/26 REPORT FROM THE ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

Noted.

772/01/26 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 considered 3 small planning applications.

A detailed discussion had taken place regarding the council's Landscape Sensitivity Study and the impending parish council public meeting. He personally thanked David Marlow (non-voting member of the Planning & Highways Committee for his continued work aiding the parish council in all planning matters.

He urged Members to contact the Clerk with any Focus Group agenda items.

Members noted the poor condition of the bridlepath at North Corner which was at times impassable. If improved cyclists and walkers could take advantage of its connectivity. It was located within the Horam and Hellingly parish. It was **AGREED** this item would be addressed at the next SLR meeting. Cllr Billings would also prepare a draft letter to be sent to the Clerk and Chairman of Hellingly Parish Council and at a later date circulated to ESCC Rights of Way and ESCC Cllr Bowdler.

Members noted that ESCC Highways had cancelled two site meetings to discuss the poor condition of the footpath leading to Maynards Green School. The parish council's concerns had now been escalated to another ESCC department which dealt with major projects.

ESCC Cllr Bowdler to provide details of a contact to whom an official complaint could be made.

ESCC Cllr Bowdler left the meeting at 8.06pm.

773/01/26
(1)

**FINANCE
RECOMMENDED**

- (a) To **Consider** the update on the ariel runway repair
Members noted Cllr Knight's report on the outstanding repair and **AGREED** both the Clerk and Cllr Knight should meet the Playdale Inspector on site to discuss where the liability fell.
- (b) To **Note** the confirmation of the appointment of April Skies Accounting – Internal audit booked for Thursday 30th April 2026
Noted.
- (c) To **Note** WDC have confirmed receipt of the HPC precept request
Noted.
- (d) To **Note** the donation process to The Brain Tumour Charity in memory of Keith Stevens Chairman of NALC has commenced
Noted.
- (e) To **Note** the EMR for the Cuckoo Trail Enhancements has been closed and funds have been transferred to a new EMR – New Land
Noted.
- (f) To **Note** the update regarding the Wealden Works, grant award for new laptops for students
Noted.
- (g) To **Note** the parish council credit card application and new bank account applications are ongoing
The Clerk was in the process of opening a new account with Unity Trust Bank and transferring funds from the council's Barclay's account to Nationwide as the new FSCS protection threshold had increased to £120,000.
Members noted the importance of a parish council credit card to claim back VAT on expenses.
- (h) To **Note** the bank reconciliations and management account reports for December 2025
Noted.
- (i) To **Note** the budget observations – verbal update
Members noted the following observations for the 3rd quarter of the financial year:
 - The council had not received the grant payment from Sussex Weald Homes for £500. The payment was being chased.
 - Annual staff costs were likely to be £2,500 under budget
 - HMCR costs may be overbudget by approximately £100
 - Pension costs were likely to be on budget
 - Club Rooms hire costs were likely to be £900 under budget
 - Computer Support Costs were likely to be £500 over budget
 - Advertising & Publicity was likely to be £400 over budget
 - There was £10,482 left in the Landscape Sensitivity budget. Members noted the Full Council December Resolution for possible additional costs of up to £4,500 plus VAT and disbursements.
 - There were still some funds left in the councillor training budget.

- The Heathfield Choral Society were the only organisation left who had not collected their grant award for £88
- All other budget headings were on target
- There were no areas of concern

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

Payee Name	Account Debited	Invoice Number	Amount £
Horam Parish Council Nationwide Bank Account	Current Account	FSCS protection limit increased to £120,000. Transfer from Barclays Savings Account	33,500.00
Staff & payroll costs	Current Account	January salaries & HMRC	4,203.35
Horam Club Rooms	Current Account	Inv 163 – rental for December	500.00
Ultralite	Current Account	To install and remove lights on community Christmas Tree	420.00
Stanley	Current Account	Stair climber service	312.00
Agrifactors	Current Account	To transport, erect and dismantle community Christmas Tree	1140.00
The Great Outdoor Gym Company	Current Account	Maintenance check of 3 rd Age Equipment	540.00
SLCC	Current Account	Annual Membership fees	379.00
ESALC	Current Account	Clerk training – the role of the internal auditor	42.00
ESALC	Current Account	Clerk training – Rights of Way	60.00
Horam Village Hall	Current Account	Hall hire for Annual Parish Meeting 26.3.2026 including refundable deposit £100	150.00
Admin Assistant	Current Account	Large printing for stiles information displayed on office window	60.00
Admin Assistant	Current Account	Memorial Plaque	45.00

Signed

Chairman

Playdale	Current Account	Annual inspection 2026	312.00
Horam Village Hall	Current Account	Monthly Waste collection service dated 1.1.2026	35.91
Wilhar Publications	Current Account	8169 – 1 additional parish page and 1 page for stiles	150.00
Uniserve	Current Account	Inv 38713 monthly charges 9.1.2026-8.2.2026	83.04
Nest	Current Account	Pension January	289.98
James Todd & Co	Current Account	Inv 88694 Dec payroll	36.60
2Oi	Current Account	Inv 8790971 16.12.2025 Micro server	11.99
2Oi	Current Account	Inv 8809141 22.12.2025 Storage upgrade	1.80
Clerk	Current Account	Black sacks for play park contractor	5.70
Clerk – Zoom payment	Current Account	Zoom 335087088 25.12.2025-24.01.2026	15.59
Clerk	Current Account	Heavy duty black sacks	6.99
Clerk	Current Account	Glue for memorial plaques	11.99
Clerk	Current Account	Calendar for office	4.99
The Finishing Touch	Current Account	December rubbish clearance	84.50
Europlants	Current Account	December plant maintenance Inv 34221	96.00

Members noted that the transfer of funds to the Nationwide would be delayed as the Clerk had to submit administration documentation before this could take place. Also, The Great Outdoor Gym Company had still not submitted an invoice so this payment would be delayed until the February Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED the above payments.

RESOLVED the payment to Christ Church for £59.50. The invoice was received late but was for the parish council's public meeting booking.

774/01/26

YOUTH CLUB TRANSPORT SERVICE UPDATE

14.1. To Note the action plan for the project and progress so far

Members noted the action plan and that the council's insurance provider had recommended the council contact a local insurance broker.

The Clerk and Cllr Knight to review the insurance advice.

14.2. To Review and Resolve the Risk Assessment

Members considered the draft Risk Assessment.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would contact a local insurance broker and update the Risk Assessment accordingly. To be represented at the February Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED the document as an interim Risk Assessment.

775/01/26

ASSERTION 10

15.1. To note the Assertion 10 Update Report

Members noted that the council had a plan in place to ensure their compliance with Assertion 10.

15.2. To re-adopt the GDPR Policy

Members noted the GDPR Policy which had been circulated prior to the meeting and that no changes had been made.

Cllr Poole abstained from voting.

RESOLVED to re-adopt the GDPR Policy.

15.3. To adopt the Document Retention Policy

Members noted the Document Retention Policy which had been circulated prior to the meeting was for re-adoption and that no changes had been made.

Cllr Poole abstained from voting.

RESOLVED to re-adopt the Documentation Policy.

15.4. To adopt the IT Policy

Members noted that draft IT Policy circulated was the NALC template policy and was very complex. It was **AGREED** more time was required to consider the Clerks suggested amendments. All Members would submit their comments to the Clerk by 31st January.

The item was deferred and would be reconsidered at the February Full Council meeting.

776/01/26

PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

16.1. To note the Clerk update on Business Plan Objectives

Members noted the following updates:

- The Vineyard had requested 3 replacement stiles. More locations and photos for replacement stiles were needed.
- A meeting had been arranged with the WDC Head of Service for Assets and Major Projects and the WDC Crematorium Manager to discuss the upgrade to the unofficial footpath leading from Chiddingly Road to the Crematorium. Two other parcels of land were also being discussed in the same location with a possibility of transfer of ownership.
- A meeting had been arranged with the Head of Maynards Green Primary School to discuss the possibility of double yellow lines opposite the school and the walking bus. The poor condition of the footpath leading to the school was noted.
- Two more trees had been measured. Another trip measuring trip would be arranged as soon as possible.
- The May Garland and Maynards Green Primary School were the first two buildings identified for researching their history.

16.2. To note the Project Leaders updates on Business Plan Objectives

- All project leaders to produce a basic Flow Chart showing the various stages of their project
- Cllr Trott to propose locations for SIDS in the parish

16.3. Culvert Monitoring

The Culvert Monitoring Table was updated.

777/01/26 TO RESOLVE THE ADOPTION OF A MEMORIAL PLAQUES POLICY

Members considered the proposed application form and policy, and amendments were made to both documents.

It was **AGREED** further consideration was required and the item was deferred to the February Full Council meeting.

778/01/26 TO RESOLVE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS ON THE 3RD, 4TH AND 5TH MARCH TO CONSIDER THE PARISH COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE WDC DRAFT LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

Members noted the parish council's public meeting was to be held on Thursday 12th February. The Chairman suggested that parish councillors should also be present for the duration of the WDC public meeting on the 18th February so members of public could ask them questions and councillors could collect feedback from them.

RESOLVED Extraordinary parish council meetings on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of March 2026. Each meeting would start at 7pm and finish at approximately 9pm.

779/01/26 UPDATE ON THE OUTSTANDING INVOICE ISSUED TO THE VILLAGE HALL RELATING TO THE PARISH COUNCIL GRANT AWARD OVERPAYMENT FOR THE GAP PATHWAY

Members noted the draft complaint had been prepared. The Clerk to send the parish council's complaint to the Charity Commission once the final amendments had been agreed.

780/01/26 HILLSIDE DRIVE CAR PARK UPDATE

The WDC Asset Register had not yet been presented to the Cabinet. The Clerk to keep the council updated.

781/01/26 DOUBLE YELLOW LINES AT THE TOP OF SICKLEHATCH LANE UPDATE

A meeting had been arranged with the Head of Maynards Green school to discuss the above. Her initial response for yellow lines had not been positive, but she had suggested an alternative.

782/01/26 EMERGENCY PLAN UPDATE

Members noted the plan had been submitted to ESCC and WDC for final approval. Further amendments had then been received from WDC, but ESCC had not yet commented.

783/01/26 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY UPDATE – Verbal update

Members noted that the public meeting on the 12th February was open to all residents. The Clerk would invite Nusrat Ghani MP, Rt Hon Steve Reed MP, the Sussex Express. The Chairman reiterated the importance of the parish council's Landscape Sensitivity Study which had been produced by outside consultants and postdates the studies already carried out by WDC several years previously.

All councillors were encouraged to attend.

There would be an exhibition and presentation followed by a questions and answers session.

The Horam Centre would be opened to the public on Saturday 14th February 9am-1pm for a further opportunity for members of the public to view the Landscape Sensitivity Study or discuss the Coxlow development.

The member of public left the meeting at 8.55pm.

- 784/01/26 TO DISCUSS ITEMS THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL COULD PUBLICISE**
Landscape Sensitivity Study and public meeting on Facebook and the website.
- 785/01/26 INFORMATION FOR/FROM COUNCILLORS (for noting or inclusion on future agendas).**
Memorial plaques, Assertion 10, update on the WDC Horam Station regarding the kiosk.
- 786/01/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
PLANNING & HIGHWAYS on Monday 26th January 2026 at 6.30pm
PLANNING & HIGHWAYS on Wednesday 11th February 2026 at 6.45pm
FULL COUNCIL on Wednesday 11th February 2026 at 7.30pm
TBC - PUBLIC EXHIBITION LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY REPORT on Thursday 12th February 2026 at 7pm
FINANCE on Wednesday 21st February 2026 at 9.30am

To: All Members of the Parish Council: Councillors: Andy Billings, Jennifer Howells, Graham Knight, Sue Lane, Virginia Roberts, Ann Sadler, Jane Trott, Jonathan Webb, Gary Brockhurst, Dan Johnston and George Poole

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