

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 11th FEBRUARY at 7.30pm to 9.17pm in the Horam Centre

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

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

PUBLIC SESSION – None.

787/02/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Cllr Lane – family commitments

RESOLVED Cllr Lane's apologies.

788/02/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Cllrs Poole, Roberts and Brockhurst – Personal Interest Item 12 - Trustee Report from parish council rep for the Horam Club Rooms Charity

789/02/26 MINUTES

RESOLVED the minutes of the council meeting on the 21st January 2026

790/02/26 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR GREG COLLINS & DIANE GOULD
WDC Cllr Gould informed Members of a new WDC initiative to help local businesses. WDC Cllr Collins confirmed that there were no plans to introduce parking charges. The Mayoral elections had been postponed until 2028. However, the Mayoral combined authority would be proceeding and would take effect from May 2026. It would be made up of two members from ESCC, two members from WSCC and two members from Brighton & Hove City Council. The new

combined authority would have some of the powers of the mayor and some of the money. The powers had not yet been clearly defined. Both district councillors would be attending the WDC exhibition in Horam for the WDC Draft Local Plan Consultation. The grant scheme for Ward Members to help local charities and organisations had been renewed for another year. Grants which had already been awarded were listed on the WDC website under Ward councillor budgets.

791/02/26 UPDATE ON THE WDC HORAM STATION KIOSK

Members noted that the Cadence Cycle Club would be running the Horam Station Kiosk. The water supply had been scheduled for the middle of February. They were still waiting for a firm date regarding the connection to the power supply but were hoping for early March. Cadence had been invited to speak at the council's Annual Parish Meeting.

792/02/26 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOB BOWDLER

ESCC Cllr Bob Bowdler reported that ESCC were overbudget. They had obtained Exceptional Funding from central government for £70m but this had come with a high interest rate on the repayment. Bankruptcy was looming along with an inevitable rise in their precept. Parking charges for ESCC car parks looked likely in the future once the combined authority was in place. The potholes had been made worse by the recent weather. Funding opportunities for children in care had been reduced. Members voiced their concerns regarding utility companies making a poor job of reinstating the roads. The Chairman informed Cllr Bowdler of the council's recent meeting with the Head at Maynards Green Primary School. Cllr Bowdler would contact the Lead Member and ensure that the Head was up to date with future plans for the school. It was highlighted that the pavement leading to the primary school could not be swept by WDC as the netting holding the bank back was spilling onto the pavement. It was noted that ESCC at the time had agreed that boarding would be used to hold the bank back but had then changed the material used to netting. The Admin Assistant was attempting to arrange a meeting with ESCC to discuss this matter. Cllr Trott requested Cllr Bowdler continued to support the parish regarding the ailing bus service.

793/02/26 REPORT FROM PCSO

Members noted that a report had not been received.

WDC Cllr Collins and Gould left the meeting at 8pm.

794/02/26 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Town & Parish Council's Recommended Basic Governance Checklist

Response from Lord Horam accepting Horam Parish Council's invitation to speak at the Annual Parish Assembly

Response from member of the public regarding action taken by HPC to encourage business owners to store their bins away from pedestrian pavements

Response from WDC Director of Place regarding HPC's urgent request for amendments to be made to the WDC Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation

Noted.

The Clerk to contact SLCC and NALC to request that the Basic Governance Checklist would be resent in a screen readable version.

795/02/25 REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

The Chairman thanked Cllr Johnson, Howells and Lane for their help delivering the flyers for the public meeting. Members noted that Lord Horam would be speaking at the council's Annual Parish Meeting to talk about the work of the House of Lords. The Chairman had drafted letters to Steve Reed MP and Nus Ghani MP regarding overdevelopment of the parish and loss of services. He had also drafted a letter to the Chairman of Hellingly parish council regarding improvements to the bridle way at North Corner. The Chairman informed Members that he had prepared the posters and the presentation slides for the public meeting. A small number of councillors including himself had met with the Head at Maynards Green School along with the Clerk. He had been attended a meeting with the WDC Head of Assets and the Manager of the crematorium to discuss improvements and enhancements to footpaths as well as the connectivity of all the individual developments and improve access to the crematorium. A site visit had been arranged for the following week. Lastly, he had attended a meeting with ESCC Highways. He urged councillors to take photographs of any drainage problems that they were aware of.

796/02/26 REPORT FROM PARISH CLERK

Noted.

The Clerk added that both herself and Cllr Knight had met the play area inspector on site to discuss the damage to the aerial runway.

797/02/26 REPORT FROM THE ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

Noted.

798/02/26 TRUSTEE REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL REP FOR THE HORAM CLUB ROOMS CHARITY

The Charity had put forward a draft leasing agreement. The AGM was being held on Monday 16th February.

Members noted that the parish council were not listed as any form of trustee with the Charity Commission. Cllr Poole, the council's nominated representative, was listed as a trustee in his own right which meant he could no longer act as the nominated representative. The Clerk confirmed that at the October 2025 Full Council meeting the council were resolved as a corporate trustee with Cllr Poole as the council's representative who would have a vote. This was clarified on the papers supplied by the charity. The Clerk stated that the council's position would need to be clarified ahead of the internal audit. The Chairman clarified the difference between the role of custodian and corporate trustee.

Members noted that the Horam Centre did offer community use through a new hot desk scheme and a local therapist.

It was **AGREED** that the matter would be discussed in detail at the impending Finance Meeting. The Clerk to gather information on the different types of trusteeships and obtain clarification from the Charity regarding the October 2025 resolution.

12.1. To consider the draft lease proposed by the Horam Club Rooms Charity

Members considered the draft lease previously circulated. The Clerk had highlighted parts for the council to consider and circulated notes on the definition of a lease and licence.

The parish council was not the sole user of the building which meant that a lease agreement was unlikely to be the best option. It was noted that a commercial lease may put the council in a difficult situation. It also appeared to have contradictory terms.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would seek legal advice to clarify if it was a lease/licence or hire agreement that was required.

799/02/26 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 not consulted on any big applications. He requested Members to note that the Focus Group Meeting would be taking place the following week.

**800/02/26 FINANCE
(1) RECOMMENDED**

(a) To **Consider** the update on the ariel runway repair
The Clerk reported that Cllr Knight and herself had met the play park inspector on site. The inspector had stated that the tear in the ariel runway grassed area was a common problem. Cllr Knight reported that the damage was due to poor design. The inspector suggested a possible solution which was to recover the whole area using a complete length of the replacement material which would be bolted underneath. Cllr Knight had contacted Playdale to request details of the material required. He stated the importance of using the same material which was not slippery. The inspector had stated that the repair was not a high risk to users. Lastly Cllr Knight reported that a few of the swing seats had been chewed but they did not need to be replaced yet. A problem had also been highlighted with a joint on the rota bouncer. Members would re-consider the councils options once the full report had been received.

(b) To **Note** the update regarding the Wealden Works grant award for new laptops for students
Members noted that the laptops were going to be purchased imminently by WW. The Clerk had confirmed that CIL may possibly be used for the purchase of the laptops if the council wished to put a detailed case together to WDC. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would pursue this.

(c) To **Note** the parish council credit card application and new bank account applications are ongoing
Members noted that all the relevant forms had been sent back to the banking institutions. The credit card application had temporarily been stalled due to lack of Clerk time.

ESCC Cllr Bob Bowdler left the meeting at 8.32pm.

(d) To **Note** the bank reconciliations and management account reports for January 2026
Noted.

(e) To **Note** the budget observations – verbal update

Members noted the following:

- All staff costs were in line with the budget
- The grant from Sussex Weald Homes had been received
- The Choral Society grant award would be paid in March.
- All community grants would have been paid before the end of the financial year
- There were no areas of concern
- All the accounts would be reviewed in detail at the upcoming Finance Committee meeting at the end of February before year end

(f) To Resolve the payments listed below:

Payee Name	Account Debited	Invoice Number	Amount £
Staff & payroll costs	Current Account	January salaries & HMRC	3919.33
Horam Club Rooms	Current Account	Inv 164 – rental for January	500.00
Image Matters	Current Account	Banner for public meeting	72.00
ESALC	Current Account	CLlr training X 3 Updates in Planning	144.00
Parish Council Websites	Current Account	Website hosting and support 5.3.2026-4.3.2027	360.00
S&P Printing	Current Account	Posters for public meeting	33.60
SLCC	Current Account	Microsoft Excel training level 1	140.40
SLCC	Current Account	Microsoft Excel training level 2	140.40
Horam Village Hall	Current Account	Monthly Waste collection service dated 1.2.2026	35.91
Wilhar Publications	Current Account	8195 – 1 additional parish page, 1 page for stiles and 1 public meeting poster	225.00
Uniserve	Current Account	Inv 38964 monthly charges 9.2.2026-8.3.2026	83.04
Nest	Current Account	Pension February	281.36
James Todd & Co	Current Account	Inv 89665 Jan payroll	36.60
2Oi	Current Account	Inv 8888944 16.1.2026 Micro server	11.99
2Oi	Current Account	Inv 8909935 22.1.2026 Storage upgrade	1.80

Signed

Chairman

Clerk	Current Account	Heavy duty black sacks	6.99
Clerk – Zoom payment	Current Account	Zoom 335087088 25.1.2026-24.02.2026	15.59
Clerk	Current Account	2 X black ink cartridges	45.54
Clerk	Current Account	Zip wire seat	113.40
The Finishing Touch	Current Account	December rubbish clearance	84.50
Europlants	Community Account	January plant maintenance Inv 3122025	96.00
Christ Church	Current Account	Resolved at January FC but did not appear on the payment list	59.50
The Great Outdoor Gym Company	Current Account	Listed on the January FC payment list – To be paid in February as Invoice received late	540.00

Members noted that the payment to The Finishing Touch had been incorrectly inputted on the agenda. The correct payment figure was £96.00 for January rubbish clearance not £84.50 for December rubbish clearance as stated on the agenda.

RESOLVED the Finishing Touch payment for £96.00.

RESOLVED the payments listed above.

The member of the public left at 8.35pm.

801/02/26

YOUTH CLUB TRANSPORT UPDATE

14.1. To Note the action plan in place

Noted.

Members noted that the Clerk had met with Wealden Minibuses who were responsible for transporting young people to Heathfield Community College. They were an experienced local company based in Heathfield. They had 3 minibuses, all the relevant insurances in places, the availability, all minibus drivers had apps on their phones which constantly monitored the speed of drivers, all DBS checks were in place. Lastly in the event of a breakdown the spare minibuses could be used.

The Clerk and Cllr Knight had a meeting arranged for Friday 27th February with Wealden Minibuses where all the individual risks on the council's Risk Register would be addressed including the parish council's liability.

The Clerk to invite the Admin Assistant to attend the meeting.

Members noted that the youth club had stated that 10 young people from Horam attend whilst the Head at Maynards Green Primary School had stated 20 young people.

The Clerk to make best efforts to provide March Full Council with a full report.

14.2. To Review updates to the Interim Risk Assessment

The Clerk to update the council at the March Full Council meeting.

802/01/26

ASSERTION 10

15.1. To note the Assertion 10 Update Report

Members noted that Assertion 10 actions were being progressed. The admin assistant had spent several hours in the basement shredding documents according to the Document Retention Policy. The report was reviewed weekly, and the council was on target to be compliant.

15.4. To adopt the IT Policy

Members had considered a simplified IT Policy which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk to add that councillors would make **best efforts** to comply with the policy when using their own devices for council business. Members noted that there was virus protection available for computers that was free of charge.

RESOLVED the IT Policy for Horam Parish Council with the above amendments. The policy to be reviewed annually.

15.3. To re-adopt the amended Publication Scheme

RESOLVED the amended Publication Scheme.

15.4. To adopt the Data Protection Audit

The Clerk updated the council by stating that both herself and the Admin Assistant had completed the data protection training and this was the first time the council had had a data protection audit. The document would continue to evolve.

RESOLVED the Data Protection Audit.

15.5. Data Protection training update

Members noted the data protection update.

15.5. To adopt the Data Protection Regulation consent form

The Clerk explained how the consent form would work. All Members agreed with the principle.

RESOLVED to adopt the Data Protection consent form.

803/02/26

PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

16.1. To note the Clerk update on Business Plan Objectives

Noted. The Clerk advised Members to provide her with any pictures of damaged stiles with a location reference. The Clerk to contact the Ramblers Association. Cllr Sadler to study the maps on the ESCC website and provide details of any stiles which had already been reported.

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

Cllr Trott had completed a flow chart for the SIDS project.

16.3. Culvert Monitoring

Cllr Billings reported that he had checked all the culverts he was responsible for.

16.4. Emergency Plan Update

The Chairman confirmed that the Clerk was still waiting for any suggested amendments from ESCC.

16.5. Double yellow lines at Sicklehatch Lane junction update

The Chairman confirmed that the Head at Maynards Green Primary School had not been supportive of the idea at the recent meeting with the council.

It was **AGREED** to remove this objective from the Business Plan.

16.6. Hillside Drive Car Park Update

The Chairman confirmed that progress on this item would be dependent on the WDC Cabinet meeting where disposal of assets would be agreed in early March. It would also be discussed at the upcoming Focus Group Meeting.

16.7. New land update

An upcoming site meeting had been arranged with WDC and the Crematorium to look at footpath upgrades to the unofficial footpath leading to the Crematorium from Chiddingly Road.

804/02/26 TO RESOLVE THE ADOPTION OF A MEMORIAL PLAQUES USER AGREEMENT AND APPLICATION FORM

Members had considered both draft documents which had been circulated ahead of the meeting.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would add that the plaques would only be installed when weather conditions allowed.

It was **AGREED** that the application form would display the five lines for the customer's inscription in the form of individual boxes for each letter.

RESOLVED the Memorial Plaque User Agreement and Application form subject to the above amendments.

805/02/26 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY UPDATE – Verbal update

The Landscape Sensitivity Report would be presented to residents at the upcoming public meeting.

806/02/26 PARISH COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING ABOUT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN HORAM ON THURSDAY 12TH FEBRUARY 7PM AT CHRIST CHURCH HALL, HOREBEECH LANE

18.1. To note the format

Members noted that the Chairman would be making a presentation which would give details of the WDC Local Plan Consultation, the findings of the Landscape Sensitivity Report and to highlight the allocated sites within the parish encouraging residents to ensure they submitted their responses to the consultation.

18.2. To note councillor attendance

Noted.

18.3. To note the Horam Centre will be open to the public on Saturday 14th February from 9am-1pm to view the Landscape Sensitivity Study

Noted. The Chairman informed Members that the Horam Centre would also be open on Saturday 14th March to offer residents a further opportunity to view the Landscape Sensitivity Study, the WDC Local Plan documents and to pick up a response form to the consultation.

18.4. To note councillor attendance at the WDC Draft Local Plan exhibition at the Horam Village Hall on Wednesday 18th February from 2pm – 8pm

The Chairman encouraged all Members to attend the WDC exhibition and to engage with residents.

807/02/26 UPDATE ON THE OUTSTANDING INVOICE ISSUED TO THE VILLAGE HALL RELATING TO THE PARISH COUNCIL GRANT AWARD OVERPAYMENT FOR THE GAP PATHWAY

Members noted that the above issue had been reported to the Charity Commission, and the Clerk was hoping to receive a response within 30 days.

Signed

Chairman

- 808/02/26 TO DISCUSS ITEMS THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL COULD PUBLICISE**
Stile update, the Saturday opening of the office, the Annual Parish Assembly and a review of the parish council public meeting.
- 809/02/26 INFORMATION FOR/FROM COUNCILLORS (for noting or inclusion on future agendas).**
Youth transport, unregistered land, review of public meeting
- 810/02/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
PARISH COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING on Thursday 12th February 2026 at 7pm Christ Church
FINANCE on Thursday 26th February 2026 at 1.30pm
PLANNING & HIGHWAYS on Monday 23rd February 2026 at 6.30pm
PLANNING & HIGHWAYS on Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 6.45pm
FULL COUNCIL on Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 7.30pm

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