



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
Held at St Micheal's Church Hall
On Thursday 12th March 2026

Councillors Present: Jason Charman (Chairman), Hazel Allinson, Mike Attard, Ian Corcoran, Tim Simpson and Elisabeth Tooms.

Also Present: Cllr Paul Marshall (WSCC, Leader)

Officer present – Locum Clerk: Celia Price FSLCC, FDA (BA (Hons) Community Governance, FSLCC

Members of the Public: 4

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

001. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Leigh Creswell, Graham Smith, Paul Mustow and HDC Councillor Paul Clarke

002. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman reminded members that declarations of interests already declared under the Localism Act 2011 stand. There were no declarations of interest on any items on this meeting's agenda.

003. Public Adjournment

Members of the public were reminded that only questions or queries on the agenda were allowed and the public adjournment is limited to 15 minutes.

A resident enquired why the minutes of the meetings held on 24th November and 2nd December were not available on the website. The Locum Clerk will investigate and rectify this.

Members were asked to consider providing paper copies of Parish Council Agendas to be available at meetings. The Clerk will provide a paper copy for anyone who requests it in advance of the meeting (giving 24 hours' notice).

004. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 15th January 2026

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 15th January 2026 as true and accurate record of the meeting.

005. Action Updates

The Locum Clerk provided an update on outstanding actions.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report.

006. District and County Councillor Reports

Apologies were noted as having been received from Cllr Paul Clarke and the Chair welcomed County Councillor and Leader Paul Marshall.

Signed:



HDC Report

HDC Cllr Paul Clarke, provided a written report which the Locum Clerk read and is summarised as follows:

Recent “Around the District” meetings have been well received by parishes, and a further round is planned for the summer.

The food waste collections are due to start from 16th March with many caddies having already been delivered.

Work on the capitol theatre remains on schedule with demolition complete and the fit-out phase beginning.

The Horsham Local Plan examination is about to reopen with the initial focus on housing numbers.

Finally, the Council Tax for 2026/27 will rise by £5.15 per year bringing the Band D charge to £180.10

WSCC Report

County Councillor Paul Marshall reported updates on Local Government Reorganisation are still awaited and could be delayed until after the May elections. He outlined that several structure models are under consideration, however the proposal from Brighton is not supported by WSCC, who will consider a judicial review if necessary.

He confirmed that the mayoral authority programme is progressing with the elections for Mayor scheduled for 2027 and shadow cabinet elections planned for 2028.

WSCC budget has been agreed without cuts to any services and includes significant investment, particularly in Highways which will result in improved pothole repair performance.

The Chair advised that he had been chasing WSCC Highways regarding drainage clearance and it seems this has been pushed back to November / December. Cllr Marshall will follow this up.

Cllr Marshall left the meeting

007. The Sportsman Toilet Refurbishment Plans

The representative from the project was unable to attend the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer to a future meeting subject to attendance at the meeting by a representative that could explain the project and answer questions.

008. Tree Warden

Following the retirement of Pam Keeble as tree warden, the volunteer position was reviewed with Russell Coates expressing an interest in the role.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Russell Coates as Tree and Pond Warden

009. Committee Reports

a Planning

Nothing to report

b Roads and Paths

The Chairman reported that all footpaths have been cut and there will be no more routine hedge cutting until 1st September due to bird nesting season. He added that the potholes in School Road have been reported and marked, indicating imminent repair. The potholes outside Hurst

Signed:

Date:

Cottages ill also be reported. In addition, the broken drain cover on the B2139 near Pickwicks has had a temporary fix and it is hoped a full repair will be carried out shortly.

Finally, complaints have been received about a hedge obstructing the highway on the B2139 leading from Mill Lane to Field End. This is a privately owned hedge and WSCC Highways have been advised.

c Assets and Amenities

The Chair advised that the new bus shelter should be installed by the middle of April and site clearance will start imminently. He also reported that there had been several incidents of graffiti during half term, cleaning of the affected areas has started.

Finally, the tractor was stolen from cricket pavilion. This has subsequently been located in Slindon (largely as a result of the immobiliser and tracker) and it is hoped that it will be returned soon. APC purchased the tractor and donated it to the cricket with conditions to return ownership should the cricket club discontinue. APC contribute to the running and insurance costs in exchange for other use around the parish. Whilst storage is the responsibility of the cricket club it was agreed that additional security measures should be discussed and the issuing of padlock codes restricted. This will be added to a future agenda.

d NP delivery / Car park

Nothing to report other than that Asset Transfer discussions are ongoing with HDC

e Village Bus

The village bus has been approached by the school to take a class to swimming lessons.

f Speedwatch

Cllr Smith will be restarting this initiative and recruiting more volunteers as the weather and daylight improves.

010. Finance

(a) bank reconciliation

(b) actual vs budget

(c) Payments made

The Locum Clerk advised that due to time constraints and changing accounting systems these reports have not been completed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the documents be emailed to members as soon as they are available.

(d) Internal audit date

It was **RESOLVED** to note the internal audit date of 22nd April 2026

(e) Internal auditor appointment

Options were discussed and a proposal from Mulberry LAS considered.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Mulberry LAS as the internal auditor for the next 3 years.

(f) PWBL repayment notice

It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the notice

(g) Grant application

Signed:

Date:



A grant application from the Church was reviewed, however there was no clear amount requested, finances are limited and the grants policy needs review.

It was **RESOLVED** to review the grants policy and Cllr Simpson will liaise with the Church Warden.

011. Governance

(a) IT Policy

(b) Planning Application Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the IT and Planning Application Policy

012. Correspondence

It was **RESOLVED** to note the list of general correspondence

013. Clerk Recruitment

Recruitment of a permanent Clerk was discussed.

It was **RESOLVED** that a recruitment working group of the Chair, Vice Chair, Cllr Attard and Cllr Simpson is established with delegated responsibility to advertise and recruit for a permanent replacement clerk.

014. Items for the next agenda and date of the next meeting

The Annual Parish Assembly is scheduled for 16th April 2026

The Annual Parish Council Meeting is scheduled for 14th May 2026

There being no further business the meeting closed @ 9 pm

Signed:

Date: