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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Mannings Heath Village Hall on Wednesday 15th October 2025 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllrs D Cotton (Chairman), Cllr C Kenny (Vice Chairman), Cllr V Court, Cllr Wayne Bayley, Cllr S Newell.

Also Present: County Councillor Nigel Jupp, District Councillor Dennis Livingstone.

Apologies: Cllr S Catterall.

Clerk: Lisa Wilcock.

There were 5 members of public.

Meeting commenced 1930hrs

0050-25/26 Attendance and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and approved from Cllr S Catterall.

0051-25/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations under the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Council Code of Conduct. No declarations of interest were made.

0052-25/26 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced the following items:

Welcome councillors and members of the public to this Meeting of the Nuthurst Parish Council

I would like to point out this is a Parish Council meeting held in Public it is not a Public Meeting where the public can speak at will.

I wish to inform Council Members and the public that the Council has recently invoked its Vexatious Complaints Policy in relation to a resident. This action was taken following repeated communications that were deemed persistent, unreasonable, and disruptive to the Council's ability to conduct its business effectively.

The Council takes all correspondence from residents seriously and strives to respond to enquiries and concerns in a timely and professional manner. However, where communications are excessive, repetitive, or intended to cause disruption, the Council is entitled to manage such interactions under its adopted policy.

I emphasise that this approach is not intended to prevent residents from raising legitimate concerns, but to ensure that Council resources are used efficiently and that all residents receive a fair and timely response. In this instance the amount of our paid Clerks time it has taken up has meant that the council monies instead of being used for the administration of our Parish have been spent dealing with a single parishioner. The council could not allow public funds to be spent in this way along with the continued disruptive behaviour so decisions to mitigate this were put into place.

The Council remains committed to transparency, accessibility, and effective communication with the community.

PLANNING

As far as possible Planning applications will be looked at by council Planning Committee who have delegated authority at the Planning Committee make meetings held on the first Wednesday of each month normally at Copsale Village Hall. This is common practice across Parish Councils. If there are any planning application which will obviously require much more attention on their own right, then a separate planning meeting can be called.

Planning Application DC/25/1044 Maplehurst. For clarity, the Parish Council will consider the application at the Planning Committee meeting on 5th November. The planning portal was down last week so access to information was not possible. HDC have confirmed that as a Parish Council we can submit our comments later which means after the meeting on the 5th. Members of the public are encouraged to email the clerk directly with comments for the PC or attend the meeting on the 5th, where the council members will welcome comments made either in support of or against this planning application. The council are fully aware of our made Neighbourhood Plan along with other planning considerations. Please note that the Parish Council acts as a statutory consultee, not the decision-maker. Therefore, any formal comments from residents must be submitted via the Horsham District Council Planning Portal, or alternatively, emailed to planning@horsham.gov.uk, where they will be uploaded to the portal.

To date only two members of the public have contacted the Clerk regarding the application. The questions were why it was not on the agenda for tonight. The clerk has replied to the member of the public reassuring them that it will be heard in public on the 5th. It is however disappointing that members of the public including ex councillors jump on social media to communicate that the Parish Council have 'ignored' what we as a council had already deemed important and moved it to the main planning meeting. Instead of coming to an ill-informed conclusion they should have written directly to the clerk who had it in hand. This post then led to some very upsetting and personal comments on the back of a 'second guessed' item. We are volunteers and trying to do our best for the Parish such behaviour by a handful of parishioners I find quite sad to be honest.

PARISH ASSETS

We are currently working on the maintenance of parish assets; small trees are being tended as part of our asset maintenance along with various sign cleaning. The asset inspection showed one bus shelter now beyond economical repair. There is meeting coming up to provide bus shelters along the A281 which the Clerk is attending as they are grant funded.

0061-25/26 Finance

a) Bank Reconciliation for September 2025 – approved.

b) Bank Transactions for September 2025 – approved.

c) Budget monthly statement (YTD) – noted.

d) Schedule of Payments for October 2025 – approved.

e) Grant Applications – Council was carried to the next meeting the following grants noted the grants are for the next FY26/27:

Monks Gate Residents – £750

The Nuthurst Society – £200

St Andrews School – £250

Nuthurst Community Allotment – £631.70

f) FY26/27 Budget and Precept – was carried to the next meeting at £59,120, representing a 2.89% increase.

g) Appointment of Mulberry LAS as Internal Auditor for FY25/26 – approved.

0053-25/26 Public Session

Members of the Public:

- Raised concerns regarding the minutes and planning in general, noting that the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) may be perceived as out of date. The Council reiterated its support for the NP and the protection it provides.
- Noted that planning application DC/25/1044 is not on the current agenda but may be of interest to the public.
- Suggested that guidance should be provided on how the public can access and review planning applications.
- Emphasized that the value of the NP is strengthened by the level of support behind it, and that it should be raised at a planning meeting.
- District Councillor Dennis Livingstone discussed the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and its emphasis on resumption in favour of sustainable development, reading out the relevant section.

0054-25/26 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on **17th September 2025** were **approved and signed** by the Chairman as a correct record.

County Councillor Nigel Jupp Devolution and Local Government Reform Update:

- An update was provided regarding **devolution** and local government reform, with Mayoral elections expected this May. Noted that the Mayor will oversee strategy related to development, which will be guided by central government and subsequently the unitary authority. Support for the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was encouraged, but it was noted that there is uncertainty regarding the weight it will carry in future decision-making. The option of forming a Unitary Authority was discussed. A business case, accepted by the local authorities, recommended that West Sussex form a single unitary authority. The potential financial savings were a key factor in this decision. Risks include the potential splitting of major services such as adult services and children's services, which would be expensive, time-consuming, and risky to implement.
- **Recycling** - will open from 9 – 4pm until March 2026.
- **Roadway works** – WSCC introduced a lane rental scheme so utility companies have to pay. Across the area in 2024 42,000 permits were granted. Since scheme in place time taken has been reduced by a third and has generated a considerable amount of income.
- **Road safety** – campaign with sussex secondary theatre of education performance, helps 6th formers to understand road safety and younger years will see a film called Road Show and primary will see Take a Second. Program supported by the County Council.
- **Water neutrality** – there will be an announcement by Natural England with a position statement. This affects housing development and public buildings like new schools opportunities and requirement for schools will need to be met.
- The **Highways Officer** reported to the County Councillor that rural roads do not require the same level of intervention as those in more built-up areas. An inspection is scheduled for the last week of October, and councillors are not permitted to attend due to safety regulations.
- **Questions and Comments:** Goldings Lane is due to be repaired and request to find out when this is scheduled. Broadwater Lane to be inspected as there are reports of misleading road closure/diversion signage.

District Councillor Dennis Livingstone reported on district matters relevant to the parish.

- **Devolution** the preferred option for forming a Unitary Authority has been confirmed as Crawley, Horsham, and Mid Sussex. The business plan is available on the website for public review.
- **Water Neutrality** Measures limiting new housing in the district under water neutrality are expected to end soon. Natural England is anticipated to announce the future of water neutrality shortly. The SNOWS update was delayed this week, with changes expected on Friday. Rachel Reeves announced that approximately 20,000 houses have been delayed due to snail-related environmental constraints. Full evidence is expected by 1st November. Implications: The lifting of water neutrality restrictions may lead to an increase in housing development in the area, which was previously restricted.
- **Inclusivity** concerns were raised regarding elderly and disabled residents, highlighting that simple design changes can significantly improve accessibility. Three-storey buildings are considered unsuitable for some residents. Approximately 6–7% of the population is disabled. Current Building Regulations (Part M) on accessibility are underutilized by developers as compliance is not mandatory. Developers are encouraged to proportionately include accessible housing. The HDC Annual Plan for the next year will support provisions for disabled persons.

Questions and Comments A question was raised regarding wastewater management and how it will be mitigated in relation to new housing developments, particularly at the levels reported in the press. Concerns were expressed about the Local Plan (LP) restricting housing development. Points made included: The population has increased by 800,000, making the argument against building new homes increasingly untenable. Homelessness and housing needs cannot be delayed due to an outdated Local Plan, which is now 10 years old. The Localism Bill did not provide sufficient follow-up measures. Point was raised that water neutrality restrictions are ineffective and should not prevent much needed development.

0056-25/26 Speed Watch

Traffic and Speeding Concerns: The Council discussed options to address speeding in Copsale, Sedgwick, and Maplehurst. It was **agreed** that the Speed Watch team would develop ideas on how to record vehicle speeds. The item will be carried forward to the next meeting for further discussion.

0057-25/26 Open Spaces Committee – Recommendations for Resolution

a) Emergency and Resilience Audit (OS0031-25/26) The audit template has been ordered. Item to be carried forward to the next meeting for first edit.

b) Bus Service Concerns (OS045-25/26) Parish Transport Update: It was noted that the District and County Councilors have met with AiRS, who are preparing a bus survey covering the entire parish. It is intended to get the survey out before Christmas.

0058-25/26 Planning Applications

The Council considered the following applications:

a) DC/25/1512 – The Coach House, Broadwater Lane, Copsale

Application to confirm continuous use of building in non-compliance with the holiday let occupancy condition.

Decision: *That the Parish Council notes the application and raises no objection to the granting of a Lawful Development Certificate, provided that Horsham District Council is satisfied with the submitted evidence demonstrating continuous residential use.*

b) DISC/25/0287 – The Haven House, Sedgwick Lane, Horsham

Approval of details reserved by Condition 1 to DC/25/0818.

Decision: Recommendation to Council: *That the Parish Council raises no objection to the discharge of Condition 1, subject to Horsham District Council being satisfied that the submitted details comply fully with the requirements of the approved plans and conditions. Council notes that the site has asbestos, and the roots of protected trees are compromised, and usage of the building is also in question.*

c) HRA/25/0024 – Amiesmill Farm, Kerves Lane, Horsham

Application under Regulation 77 relating to Prior Approval consent DC/24/0084.

Decision: *That the Parish Council notes the application and requests confirmation from Horsham District Council that an appropriate habitats assessment has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, ensuring no adverse impact on protected sites or species.*

d) DISC/25/0282 – Great Ventors Development Site, Coolhurst Close, Monks Gate

Approval of details reserved by Condition 6 to DC/21/1798.

Decision: *That the Parish Council raises no objection to the discharge of Condition 6, subject to Horsham District Council confirming that the submitted details are satisfactory and comply with the approved design and environmental requirements.*

0059-25/26 Parish Logo

The Council reviewed the revised Parish Council logo and agreed to adopt the *worded logo* for official letterheads and the *thumbnail version* for online and digital applications.

0060-25/26 Playground Report

a) The playground inspection report was received and accepted.

b) Quotes for improvements to playground fencing are to be considered at the next available meeting.

0062-25/26 Assertion 10

a) Council noted the Clerk's report following Assertion 10 training undertaken with Mulberry LAS.

b) The following policies were reviewed and in line with NALC/ICO model documents:

- I. IT Policy
- II. Data Protection Policy
- III. Accessibility Statement
- IV. ICO Publication Scheme
- V. Data Protection and Information Security Training Policy

It was **agreed** to carry the policy adoption to the next meeting and to arrange a group training session on GDPR. Clerk to arrange a quotation of costs.

0063-25/26 **Items for the Next Agenda**

Members were invited to submit items for consideration at the next meeting. The following suggestions were received:

- **“Slow Down for Horses” Signs (BHS):** To consider providing a map indicating proposed locations for the signs.
- **Adur Group Collaboration:** To explore potential cooperation with the Adur Group, given that two rivers within the parish feed into the River Adur, and to discuss possible joint initiatives on flooding.
- **Parish Council Communications:** To discuss improved use of social media and other methods of promoting the work of the Parish Council.

0064-25/26 **Date of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Wednesday 19th November 2025**.

Members noted that **no meeting will be held in December**.

Meeting closed at 20.58hrs

Signed: **Date:**.....