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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Mannings Heath Village Hall on Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 7.30 pm.

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

Apologies: Cllr P Rymarz, Cllr W Bayley, Cllr S Catterall.

Clerk: Lisa Wilcock.

There were 7 members of public.

Meeting commenced 1930hrs

0080–25/26 Attendance and Apologies for Absence

Councillors present: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr P Rymarz, Cllr W Bayley and Cllr S Catterall.

RESOLVED: Apologies for absence were accepted and approved.

0081–25/26 Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other interests in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Council Code of Conduct. No declarations were made.

0082–25/26 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman made the following announcements for information only. No decisions were made under this item.

Website – The Chair thanked the Clerk for their work on the website, which is now live, significantly improved, and far more informative. The site will continue to develop over time. Residents are encouraged to keep reporting issues such as potholes, flooding, and road defects so that WSCC Highways can prioritise and schedule repairs.

Neighbourhood Plan – Southwater Parish Council is currently reviewing its Neighbourhood Plan and has invited NPC to participate in an exploratory meeting with neighbouring parishes. It was noted that NPC objected to the proposed housing development in Maplehurst based on policies contained within the made Neighbourhood Plan. A review will therefore be required. NPC will attend the next workshop, and the Clerk will also raise the matter at the upcoming WSLAC forum.

Carbon Busters – Carbon Busters are undertaking works at the golf course, including coppicing scheduled for Friday. The Chair thanked the group for their continued work within the parish, including advice on the air source heat pump.

0083–25/26 Public Session

Members of the public addressed the Council on agenda items.
No items raised.

0084–25/26 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

The minutes of the following meetings were considered:

- Parish Council Meeting held on **19 November 2025**
- Planning Committee Meeting held on **5 November 2025**
- Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on **3 September 2025**

RESOLVED: The minutes were approved as accurate records and signed by the Chairman.

0085–25/26 Finance

a) Bank Reconciliation (November & December 2025) - The bank reconciliation for November and December 2025 was presented. **RESOLVED:** The bank reconciliation was approved.

b) Bank Transactions (November & December 2025) - The list of transactions for the period was reviewed. **RESOLVED:** The bank transactions were approved.

c) Budget Monthly Statement (Year-to-Date) - The Year-to-Date budget statement was noted. **NOTED.**

d) Ear Marked Reserves (EMR) - The schedule of Ear Marked Reserves was considered. **RESOLVED:** The Ear Marked Reserves were approved.

e) Grant Applications

The following grant applications, previously carried under minute reference **0061–25/26(e)**, were considered:

- Monks Gate Residents – £300
- The Nuthurst Society – £200
- St Andrews School – £250
- Nuthurst Community Allotment – £631.70

RESOLVED: To agree the grant of £300 for the Monks Gate Residents at a adjusted value of £300, Nuthurst Society to the value of £200, St Andrews School £250, Nuthurst Community Allotment £631.70 to be paid with the schedule of payments.

f) Schedule of Payments – January 2026 - The schedule of payments for January 2026 was considered.

RESOLVED: The schedule of payments was approved to include min reference (e).

g) Budget FY26/27 and Precept - The final draft Budget for FY26/27 was considered, including the setting of the Precept in advance of the HDC deadline of **26 January 2026**. **RESOLVED:** The Budget FY26/27 was approved and the Precept set accordingly £61,200.00 an increase of 4.5%.

0086–25/26 Reports from Other Authorities

County Councillor – Nigel Jupp

Highways and Weather Impact – An increasing number of potholes has been reported, attributed to the poor weather experienced - during the latter half of 2025 reports were below average. A resident of Monks Gate Residents Association has written regarding a hole in the pavement. Southern Water is awaiting the opportunity to undertake related works, and an update has been arranged.

Road Safety (Wildlife) – Correspondence was received from a resident regarding the danger posed by deer on the A281 towards Hammerpond. Cllr S. Newell will follow this up.

Local Government Reorganisation / Mayoral Election – Authorities are continuing preparations for the creation of a Mayoral role. Discussions continue around the potential formation of unitary authorities. HDC has joined with other councils, while it was noted that West Sussex County Council would benefit from being a single unitary authority. It was reported that approximately 80% of services are delivered by WSCC, and that a single unitary structure would be around £30 million more cost-effective than having two.

County Council Budget 2026/27 – The provisional budget proposal indicates an increase in County Council tax of 4.99%, comprising 2.99% for general costs and 2% for social care. This equates to an additional £1.73 per week for a Band D household. Revenue is expected to increase from £660 million to £900 million, including Government grants.

Gagglewood and Local Roads – Potholes and manhole cover issues have been reported in Gagglewood. The Clerk and County Councillor Nigel Jupp will contact WSCC Highways. Goldings Lane resurfacing was also noted.

b) District Councillor – Dennis Livingstone

A report was received and read out by the Chair in the District Councillors absence.

The proposed budget not only improves financial stability but also prioritises support for the most vulnerable residents, whilst investing in key capital projects. Thanks to ongoing prudent financial management and healthy reserves, the Council remains well-positioned to protect essential services, support those in need, and invest in projects that enhance the quality of life of residents across the Horsham District. The budget includes a significant £35 million capital investment programme over two years. This will fund vital infrastructure improvements such as home repairs, disabled facility improvements and housing enabling grants, completion of

a £10.2 million refurbishment of The Capitol theatre, building upgrades to the Rec Rooms, a new community centre for Highwood, and enhanced community facilities in Billingshurst, as well as the purchase of new waste collection vehicles. To help meet rising costs, fees and charges across Council services will increase, resulting in a modest £5.15 annual rise (2.94%) for a Band D property. HDC will again have the lowest Council Tax across Sussex. Capital Theatre The final performance of the Horsham Panto on January 4th marks the beginning of a 10-month closure for the Capital Theatre, which will undergo a major refurbishment. The last refurbishment took place in 2002, and the theatre is in dire need of updates to address various issues with the building. This refurbishment will significantly enhance the overall customer experience, with improvements across the theatre, including cinema screens, seating, auditorium spaces, bar, and public areas. The goal is to create a modern, welcoming, and high quality environment. All toilets will be updated, with additional facilities provided for women to reduce queue times during intervals. There will also be significant improvements for disabled individuals. A Changing Places facility will be created, and additional seating arrangements for wheelchair users and customers with limited mobility will provide more accessible viewing positions and increased space to sit with friends and family. Additionally, behind the scenes, we will be upgrading the plumbing and heating systems and replacing the boilers. It will re-open in time for the 2026 panto season in November 2026.

0087–25/26 Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces Committee Items

a) Emergency and Resilience Audit (OS0031–25/26)

An update was received. A meeting will be arranged between Cllr P. Rymarz, Cllr S. Catterall, and Cllr C. Kenny. The audit has been reviewed by Cllr C. Kenny, who identified several areas requiring further consideration. This item will be carried forward to the next meeting.

b) Bus Service (OS0045–25/26)

The delegation of two Parish Councillors to meet with AiRS and progress the agreed survey was considered.

RESOLVED: Cllr C. Kenny and Cllr D. Cotton were appointed to meet with AiRS to progress this matter.

c) Community Bus - The delegation of two Parish Councillors to meet with AiRS in order to progress the agreed survey was considered.

RESOLVED: Cllr C. Kenny and Cllr D. Cotton were appointed to undertake this work.

d) Parish Caretaker - The possibility of employing a Community Caretaker was considered. It was noted that the Neighbourhood Warden role may not be suitable; however, the Council could consider employing a caretaker to provide a range of services for the parish. Potential responsibilities may include playground maintenance and repairs, cleaning duties, assisting residents, reporting issues to Highways, minor tree maintenance, seasonal decorations (such as a Christmas tree), supporting the Church with minor tasks, acting as a Community Bus driver, carrying out defibrillator checks, and other community support activities. It was **agreed** that the proposal would be circulated to neighbouring councils to assist in developing a prospectus, which would be brought back to the Council for further consideration.

Action: Cllr S. Newell.

e) Grit Bins – The application for licences and the purchase of two new grit bins, to be located in Kerves Lane and at the junction of Coltstaple Lane, were considered.

RESOLVED: The application and purchase of the two grit bins were approved in principle. Several potential locations will be submitted to WSCC Highways for licence consideration.

0088–25/26 Planning Applications

The following planning applications were considered:

a) DC/26/0013 – Great Steeds Farm House, Copsale Road, Mapleshurst RH13 6QY

Erection of single storey side and rear extensions (Lawful Development Certificate – Proposed).

RESOLVED: The Parish Council **has no objection**.

b) DC/26/0014 – Great Steeds Farm House, Copsale Road, Mapleshurst RH13 6QY

Prior approval for enlargement of an existing dwellinghouse by addition of an additional storey.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council **objection**, over intensification of the plot, not inkeeping with area and overpowers the beauty of the farmhouse on the same plot.

c) DC/25/2163 – The Old Cottage Farm, Nuthurst Road, Mapleshurst RH13 6RE

Surgery to 1 × Oak. Tree Wardens recommended no objection to the surgery going ahead.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council **has no objection**.

d) DC/25/2112 – Willow House, 4 The Quarries, Mannings Heath RH13 6SW

Surgery to 1 × Willow. Tree Wardens recommended no objection to the surgery going ahead

RESOLVED: The Parish Council **has no objection**.

0089–25/26 Planning Applications Received Since Publication of the Agenda

a) DC/25/1986 Park Farm Bungalow Sedgwick Park Horsham West Sussex

Variation of condition 1 of previously approved application reference DC/19/0166 (Erection of a single and a two storey side extensions) to amend the plans as the scheme has been reduced to a single storey over the same footprint.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council **has no objection**.

b) DC/25/2120 Maplenut Farm Maplehurst Road West Grinstead West Sussex

Retention of sand school and 3 buildings for mixed agricultural and private equestrian use (Retrospective).

Members noted that the development is retrospective and reiterated the importance of seeking planning permission prior to development.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council **has no objection**.

c) DC/25/2079 - Cotlands Paddock Horsham Road Cowfold West Sussex RH13 8AH

Use of land for the stationing of 4no. static caravans for (Gypsy and Traveller) residential purposes and associated day rooms.

It was **agreed** to respond as follows - noting that although the application site lies outside the Parish Council's administrative boundary, the issues raised may have wider implications beyond the host parish. The Parish Council noted in particular the potential for cumulative impacts on landscape character, local infrastructure, and public confidence in the planning process. Members agreed that, for this reason, the matter warranted consideration and comment by this Council. The existence of an active Enforcement Notice was noted, and Members expressed the view that this indicates unresolved concerns regarding compliance with planning control. The Council considered it important that such matters are fully addressed and regularised before, or as part of, any determination of the current planning application. It was agreed that any proposal should be assessed not only on its individual merits, but also with regard to cumulative and cross-boundary impacts, including visual amenity, traffic movements, environmental considerations, and consistency with adopted local and neighbourhood planning policies.

RESOLVED: To write a letter of concern to HDC Planning Officer.

d) Appeal Decision

To note Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/W/25/3374889

Ghyll House Farm, Recadera Stud, Broadwater Lane, Copsale, West Sussex RH13 6QW

Dismissed 16th January 2025.

0090–25/26 HDC Community Asset Transfer

The Community Asset Transfer Expression of Interest and Business Case were considered for the following assets, previously resolved under minute **0041–25/26**:

- Gaglewood – Woodland (WSX253311), Mannings Heath
- Woodlands Walk – Open Space (WSX287701), Mannings Heath
- Abinger Cottages – Open Space (WSX294950), Maplehurst

RESOLVED: The Expression of Interest and Business Case were **approved** and will be sent to HDC Communities.

0091–25/26 Playground

a) Playground Report - The Playground Report was received and accepted. **RESOLVED:** The report was accepted.

b) Replacement Playground Fencing - The costs for replacement fencing were considered.

RESOLVED: The Chair will reassess the fencing to incorporate the proposed sensory boards and report back to the Council. The Clerk will provide the Chair with the latest specification from the previous resolution for review and amendment.

c) Playground Improvements – Proposed improvements, including new sensory boards, were discussed.

RESOLVED: The Chair will present a comprehensive plan incorporating a replacement bench, sensory boards, and updated fencing with access gates. The Clerk will provide the information gathered to date.

0092–25/26 Website

The launch of the new Parish Council website was noted. **RESOLVED:** The action was closed as website project complete.

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0093–25/26 Items for the Next Agenda

Suggestions for future agenda items were received, including: Proposals regarding deer and road signs, and the replacement of the bus shelter at Nuthurst, to be considered with proper quotations.

0094–25/26 Date of the Next Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Wednesday 18 February 2026**.

Meeting closed at 2128hrs

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