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

Present: Cllr D Cotton (Chair), Cllr C Kenny, Cllr V Court, Cllr W Bayley, Cllr Rymarz, Cllr J Harris, Cllr S Newell.
Apologies: Cllr S Catterall.
District Councillor: Cllr Dennis Livingstone.
Clerk: Lisa Wilcock.
There was 2 members of public present.

Meeting commenced: 1930hrs

083-26/27 Attendance and Apologies for Absence
The Council noted the attendance of members and considered apologies for absence.
Apologies received: Cllr S Catterall and District Councillor Alex Jeffrey.
RESOLVED: To accept the apologies.

084-26/27 Declarations of Interest
Members were invited to declare any interests in items on the agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Council's Code of Conduct. Any requests for dispensations were considered.
No declarations were made.

085-26/27 Chairman's Announcements
The Chairman was invited to make announcements or bring items of information to the attention of the Council.
NOTED: The Chair welcomed the recent rainfall following the prolonged drought.
It was noted that Gagglewood had been resurfaced with tarmac by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to protect the corner at the entrance to the waterworks. Concerns were raised regarding cars parking on the newly seeded verge by residents. Water leaks continue to occur across the Parish. County Councillor Alex Jeffery is liaising with Southern Water to address the ongoing issues. The leaks are believed to be linked to the clay soil conditions, which, following the drought, have caused the ground to shrink. The Chair also reminded members of the upcoming events: the Carbon Busters retrofit event on 22 October, and the WSALC conference on 4 November, Autumn Fair at the Village Hall which is in aid of St Catherine's Hospice. No decisions were taken under this item.

086-26/27 Public Session
The Chairman invited members of the public to raise questions or make representations relating to parish matters and items on the agenda. Individual contributions were limited to two minutes per speaker.
No comments were made.

087-26/27 Minutes of the Previous Meeting
The Council considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16 September 2026.
RESOLVED: It was **resolved** to **approve** the minutes the Chair signed the minutes.

088-26/27 Finance
a) Bank Reconciliations – September 2026

The Council reviewed the bank reconciliations for September 2026.
RESOLVED: To approve the bank reconciliations for September 2026. The Chair signed the reconciliation.

b) Bank Transactions – September 2026

The Council reviewed the bank transactions for September 2026.
RESOLVED: To approve the bank transactions for September 2026.

c) Year-to-Date Budget Monitoring Statement

The Council reviewed the Year-to-Date Budget Monitoring Statement.
NOTED: The current budget position was noted.

d) Schedule of Payments – October 2026

The October 2026 schedule of payments was available at the time of the meeting.
NOTED: The schedule of payments was agreed.

e) Annual Budget 2027/28

The Council considered the proposed annual budget for the 2027/28 financial year.
RESOLVED: To approve the annual budget for the financial year 2027/28.

f) Precept 2027/28

The Council considered the proposed Precept of £62,100 for the 2027/28 financial year, representing an increase of 3.3%.
RESOLVED: To approve the Precept of £62,100 for FY2027/28, representing a 3.3% increase.

g) Nuthurst Parish Council Business Plan

The Council considered the Nuthurst Parish Council Business Plan.
RESOLVED: To approve and adopt the Business Plan, recognising that it may be reviewed and amended as required.

h) Grant Applications

The Council considered grant applications from Mannings Heath Village Hall and Nuthurst Cricket Club.
RESOLVED: To defer consideration of the grant application from Mannings Heath Village Hall.
RESOLVED: It was further resolved to award Nuthurst Cricket Club a grant of £8,000 towards the provision of cricket nets, together with an additional grant of £250 towards the maintenance of the driveway.

i) Poppy Wreath

The Council noted that the Clerk had purchased the poppy wreath in advance and presented it to the Chair.
NOTED: The purchase and presentation of the wreath were acknowledged. The wreath would be used for the Remembrance service at St Andrew's Church on 8 November at 10:45 am.

1089-26/27. Reports from Other Authorities

District Councillor Dennis Livingstone

The Council received a report from District Councillor Dennis Livingstone, covering the following matters:

1. Community Governance Review

The Community Governance Review has been approved. Several parishes in Horsham and North Horsham will be combined to form one parish, while there will be no changes to Lower Beeding or Nuthurst.

2. Low Income Family Tracker

Horsham District Council has purchased a three-year licence for the Low Income Family Tracker software package. The system is intended to help low-income residents access the benefits and support available to them. It will support the work of the Cost of Living Officer and Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) advisers, helping to speed up the application process through a self-service online facility.
It was reported that approximately £31 million in benefits remains unclaimed by Horsham residents. The scheme is funded through Government grants and therefore does not incur any additional cost to the Council.

3. Changes to the HDC Constitution

Changes have been made to the Horsham District Council (HDC) Constitution in relation to the National Scheme of Delegation, which became mandatory on 31 October 2016. The latest changes were made on 16 October 2026.

4. Draft Local Plan

The Inspector's hearings on the Draft Local Plan commenced last week and are expected to conclude by Friday, 23 October 2026. The hearings are being held in public and can be followed online.

Objections have been raised by the MP representing the south of the district, and a request has been made to move the proposed Adversane development to Buck Barn.

5. Capitol Theatre

The works at the Capitol Theatre have been completed, and the building has been handed back to Horsham District Council in readiness for the pantomime season, which begins on 29 November 2026.

6. Community Bus Service

Discussions have taken place with a community bus company regarding the potential provision of minibuses. Further discussions will be held, and the Parish Council will continue to be kept informed and involved in the process.

090-26/27. Playground

a) Playground Inspection Report

The Council considered the Playground Inspection Report. **RESOLVED:** To accept the report.

b) Proposed Playground Upgrade

The Council considered the proposed design for the playground upgrade, including the provision of accessible and inclusive play equipment. Further details were awaited. The Chair presented the proposals in the form of a tender document, which also included plans for revised external fencing. The proposals aim to provide more inclusive play opportunities for children under five, including interactive equipment accessible to children with special educational needs. It was noted that these improvements could also help to address the existing mud issues. Members emphasised the importance of ensuring that the playground was not overcrowded with equipment, allowing sufficient open space for children to run around and play freely.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to proceed with issuing the tender document and to share the proposals with the community for feedback. The Chair and Cllr Rymarz were delegated to progress the proposals and coordinate the next steps.

c) Playground Fencing

The Council considered the proposed improvements to the playground fencing, as outlined in the tender document presented under the previous agenda item. The proposals aim to improve the safety and security of the playground.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to include the fencing improvements within the tender process, as detailed in the previous agenda item.

091-26/27. Roads, Footpaths and Open Spaces

a) Bug Hotel Project

The Council received a verbal update on the Bug Hotel Project.

NOTED: The relevant authorities and landowners have been contacted regarding the proposed sites. It was agreed that the Abinger Cottages site would not be pursued further. The Council identified a suitable corner of the Green near Greens Lane, which is owned by the Parish Council, as a potential location for a bug hotel. An additional site at Lime Kiln, Copsale, on land owned by a Councillor, was also offered for consideration.

b) Community Speedwatch

The Council received a verbal update on Community Speedwatch. The discussion was deferred to agenda item 11.

c) Mannings Heath Village Green Trees and Replacement Chestnut Trees

The Council received a verbal update regarding the trees on Mannings Heath Village Green, the replacement chestnut trees and the condition of local fingerposts. A quotation is awaited for the replacement of two chestnut trees on the Green. The cost of grinding out one stump is £390. It was agreed that the work could be deferred until next year, when hiring a stump grinder may be more cost-effective if additional stumps can be removed at the same time. A quotation has been received for a survey of the trees along Greens Lane, covering the pine trees and two oak trees, at a cost of £5,675 plus VAT. The survey includes the use of electronic equipment to X-ray the trees. It was **agreed** that a revised quotation should be requested to survey seven trees only, to establish the difference in cost. The revised quotation will be brought back to the Council for consideration at the next meeting.

Fingerpost – Broadwater Lane, opposite Pole Cat Lane

The Council discussed the fingerpost located on Broadwater Lane, opposite Pole Cat Lane, which requires refurbishment. It was noted that the post and directional finger are metal, and options for refurbishment will be explored. Carry to next meeting.

092-26/27. Bus Route 17 – Dun Horse Bus Stops

a) Proposed Southbound Bus Shelter

The Council considered the proposed installation of a new bus shelter at the Dun Horse southbound bus stop. Members noted that further site investigations and groundworks might be required due to the bank behind the proposed location.

RESOLVED: It was agreed not to proceed with the installation, as the available ground was not considered deep enough to provide a suitable foundation for the shelter.

b) Refurbishment of Northbound Bus Shelter

The Council considered the proposed refurbishment of the existing bus shelter at the Dun Horse northbound bus stop, including the possibility of funding the works through the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

RESOLVED: It was agreed not to proceed with the refurbishment.

c) New Monks Gate Bus Shelter

The Council discussed replacing the bus shelter on both sides of Monks Gate. It was proposed that the new shelter be positioned where the existing bench is currently located southbound. Members noted that residents would not prefer a glass-sided shelter but a simple wooden shelter, funded through the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), was considered an acceptable alternative. It was **agreed** that the shelter should have wooden sides and a rear seat, although a perch seat would also be acceptable. No additional side protection would be required.

ACTION: Cllr S. Newell to obtain quotations for replacing the two bus shelters, including the shelter on the opposite side of the road.

093-26/27 - Speedwatch

a) Elancity EVOLIS Radar – Warranty Extension

The Council considered the proposed three-year warranty extension for the Elancity EVOLIS radar units at a cost of £199 annum, excluding VAT. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that the warranty should be extended for all Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs).

RESOLVED: To **approve** the three-year warranty extension for all SIDs at a cost of £199 per annum, excluding VAT.

b) Community Speedwatch Group

The Council discussed the Community Speedwatch group and related matters. It was reported that speed surveys had been carried out along Pound Lane using rubber traffic-counting strips, with monitoring undertaken on two weekdays and once at the weekend. The speed gun results identified two potential target areas for further monitoring. It was **proposed** that the speed gun be used over the coming months to gather additional data, which could support a future request for a Speed Indicator Device (SID) to be installed in Pound Lane. Broadwater Lane, Copsale Road, Maplehurst and Bar Lane were also discussed. Existing Community Speedwatch volunteers are willing to resume monitoring in these locations; however, no additional local residents have come forward to assist. The Council noted that, although residents have expressed concerns about speeding, there has been limited support in terms of volunteering to help address the issue.

c) Broadwater Lane

The Council discussed ongoing issues relating to Broadwater Lane, including the road diversion. It was noted that District Councillor Alex Jeffrey is dealing with the matter.

094-26/27 Community Resilience Hub Initiative

The Council received an update following acceptance of the invitation from West Sussex County Council and discussions with neighbouring parish councils regarding the proposed joint Community Resilience Hub. It was noted that the Sussex Community Foundation is offering funding to support projects of this nature, and the Council was encouraged to consider suitable uses for the grant. Given Nuthurst's strategic position and its potential to provide support during an emergency, it was suggested that the Council obtain quotations for a generator to support the Parish Council's emergency resilience arrangements. Members discussed the

practicalities of purchasing and maintaining a generator, including ongoing maintenance costs and warranty arrangements. Further consideration will be given to the options available and the potential funding opportunities.

095-26/27. Planning Applications
The Council considered planning applications currently open for consultation.
a) DC/26/1511 – Copsale Road, Copsale, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6QT
Proposal: Application for a Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) to confirm the continuous use of Bridge House Annexe as a self-contained, independently occupied dwellinghouse.
Resolved: The Parish Council wishes to raise concerns regarding this application. The Parish Council therefore defers to the Local Planning Authority to assess any evidence and determine whether the requirements for the granting of a Lawful Development Certificate have been met.

096-26/27. Planning Applications Received Since Publication of the Agenda
The Council considered whether any new planning applications had been validated since the publication of the agenda.
NOTED: No further planning applications had been received.

097-26/27. Horsham District Council – National Scheme of Delegation for Planning Applications
The Council noted the forthcoming changes to the arrangements for referring planning applications to Horsham District Council's Planning Committee. The agenda advised that the Government's mandatory National Scheme of Delegation was intended to be implemented from 14 October 2026, subject to approval.
Members noted the following key provisions:
Gateway 1: Certain applications, including householder and minor residential applications for 1–9 homes, would be determined by officers, subject to specified exclusions.
Gateway 2: Eligible applications could be referred for committee consideration where the relevant criteria were met, including a request from the Parish Council.
Gateway 3: Applications would need to raise issues of local economic, social or environmental significance, or other significant planning matters, to qualify for referral to Planning Committee.
Parish Council requests: Requests for committee consideration of eligible Schedule 2 applications would need to be submitted in writing within the consultation period, explicitly requesting referral and the opportunity to speak, and providing clear reasons addressing the relevant significance tests.
Members noted that submitting planning representations would remain important, regardless of whether applications were determined by officers or the Planning Committee.
NOTED: The email and the proposed changes were noted by the Council.

098-26/27. Community Governance Review
The Council noted that no changes to the parish boundaries of Nuthurst were proposed as part of the Community Governance Review.
NOTED: The Council acknowledged the update.

099-26/27. Items for the Next Agenda
NOTED: The following items were proposed for discussion:
- Caretaker arrangements.
- Billingshurst Community Bus Company and potential bus service provision.

100-26/27. Date of the Next Meeting
The Council considered the date of the next meeting of Nuthurst Parish Council 25th November 2026 – venue to be advised.

Meeting ended at 2112 hrs.

Signed: …….. Date:…….