Minutes of the Highclere Parish Council Meeting

Westridge Studio

Tuesday 13 October at 7.30pm

Members Present: Cllr York (chair), Cllr Bartholomew, Cllr Morrey, Cllr Eyre, Cllr Falconer

Clerk: Amy White

In attendance: Three members of the public

1. 50/26 Apologies for Absence

Received from Cllr Easton and Cllr MacIver.

2. 51/26 Declarations of Interest

None.

3. 52/26 To agree Annual Meeting Minutes of 08 September 2026

The meeting Minutes of 08 September 2026 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman, Cllr York.

4. 53/26 Matters arising from Meeting held on 08 September 2026

Number	Action	Person
21/26	Clerk to purchase a replacement SID and possibly a trail camera (£50 from Amazon)- Actioned- two SIDs purchased from MessageMaker.	**Clerk**
44/26	Clerk to request temporary Tubbs Lane pole to Brian Cainey of HCC- Actioned but also see item 8. Cllr Morrey to draft a formal application to rent the Glebe- Not actioned- see item 8. Clerk to check with The Red House that they are still happy to be listed as an ACV- Actioned and application has been submitted. Approx 8 week wait to find out whether this has been successful. Cllr Morrey to draft an application to register the Glebe as an ACV- Actioned. Approx 8 week wait to find out whether this has been successful.	**Clerk** **Cllr Morrey** **Clerk** **Cllr Morrey**

5. 54/26 Co-option of Carolyn Dixon

Carolyn Dixon was formally co-opted to the parish council and signed a declaration of office form in front of the Clerk.

Action: Clerk to organise training for Cllr Dixon.

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6. 55/26 Public participation

Two members of the public spoke about receiving an enforcement notice on their fence (above the height limit for a fence abutting a highway). The council explained that this rests with the BDBC enforcement team.

7. 56/26 Reports from County and Borough Councillors

Cllr John Izett reported on the following:

Consultation on the Closure of the Clere School:

- Concerns raised about the lack of secondary provision in Northeast Hampshire.
- Potential for 800 new dwellings in the parish, raising questions about future school capacity.
- Current enrollment is around 300 (down from 517 in 2013).
- Concerns about the impact on house prices and the lack of transport/services.
- Need for a controlled closure process and clear communication with parents.

Local Plan & Call for Sites:

- New consultation on the local draft plan and a new call for sites.
- Administration citing water supply problems as a reason for delays.
- Opposition questioning this rationale, noting it is a government/water company issue.

Planning Process Changes:

- New national scheme of delegation starting October 31st will reduce borough councillor influence.
- Decisions will largely be made by the chief planning officer.
- Concerns were raised about the undemocratic nature of this change.

Local Government Reorganisation:

- Belief that the previous reorganisation plan is dead.
- Expectation that a new mayor will be inserted above existing councils, with elections potentially moved up to May 2027.

8. 57/26 HPC Action Plan

Please see the updated action plan on our website: www.highclere-pc.gov.uk.

20mph speed limit: The Clerk sent an email to Brian Cainey of HCC who advised of the process of applying for a 20mph speed limit, and that it is costly to site a temporary pole on Tubbs Lane, plus any traffic scheme requiring HCC input may take weeks and could cost in excess of £500. It was agreed not to pursue the 20mph speed limit in Tubbs Lane and instead site a SID there as part of the rota.

SID: Clerk has purchased two MessageMaker speed indicator devices at a total cost (excl VAT) of £6325.20. These will be passed to Kevin Tooze to reinitiate the SID rota.

Mount Road safety concerns: this is with Highways, the Clerk has chased this again.

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Glebe: The PC has requested to rent this land from the diocese for nearly two years but has got nowhere. This will be revisited in December when the council may have information on whether the Glebe has been accepted as an ACV.

9. 58/26 Update on bus service

Cllr Dick of EWPC has shared their most recent communication on the bus service with HPC:

Bus service Loss: Shopper Handybus

Following discussion at our recent East Woodhay PC meeting, I attach below copies of my most recent correspondence with Cllr Forster as the councillor responsible for Transport at HCC. Additionally, I have had helpful discussions with the Volunteer Centre West Berks, in Newbury who are keen to further promote the use of the service into Newbury on Wednesdays.

Ashmansworth Taxi share

Here also is a summary update I provided to EWPC on the current ride-share taxi service following a conversation with the responsible HCC Transport Officer.

- *The Ashmansworth – Newbury taxishare service is contractually operated by JDR Cars of Basingstoke.*
- *The service is currently fully funded by Basingstoke & Deane BC until March 2027 with individual passenger contribution priced at £2.00 per trip.*
- *B&DBC funding beyond the above date is not yet clarified; there is no current forward determination of additional funding provision from HCC.*
- *Current loads are on or near service capacity of the Taxi provider estimated at **circa 125 passengers per month** with a mix of occasional and some regular users; desirability of any further publicity will be checked by HCC with JDR Cars and B&DBC vs current funding cap prior to any request to further publicise the service to the community.*
- *For comparison, the last available average monthly sum for 2024/2025 reported Stagecoach journeys on routes **7 & 7A** prior to closure (sum of adults, children and concessions) at **2,748 passengers per month,** within which return tickets were routinely listed only as one journey. However, total data by journey stages along the routes was unavailable, hindering any assessment of local parish passenger demand.*

10. 59/26 Litter Warden- policies for approval

The Clerk has formalised policies for the Litter Warden, which will be emailed and posted to Dave McClelland with an expectation of agreement.

Council approved policies.

Action: Clerk to send policies to Litter Warden.

11. 60/26 Neighbourhood Plan

Colin Wall sent in the following report:

***Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Update** PlanET identified necessary amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan to align with the new National Planning Policy Framework*

(NPPF). The Steering Group (SG) has agreed to these limited changes. The revised NP was submitted to Basingstoke on September 25th and acknowledged on September 30th. A response is expected by mid-October. While preparations for the Regulation 14 consultation could begin, the SG awaits Basingstoke's feedback to determine any required modifications. It is anticipated that the Regulation 14 consultation will commence in November, likely running for an eight-week period to accommodate the Christmas and New Year holidays. Additional costs related to the NPPF alignment may arise, though efforts will be made to utilise grant funding where possible, and severe additional costs are not expected.

Basingstoke Local Plan (LP) Consultation *Basingstoke has initiated its first consultation on the new Local Plan under the revised NPPF regime, necessitated by water supply constraints from South-West Water/Southern Water affecting the previous plan. The Chairman reviewed the three consultation documents and concluded they outline the methodology, key issues, and timetable for the new LP. The SG requests the Parish Council's (PC) view on this matter. The new Spatial Strategy has not yet been published. The potential implications of submitting the NP prior to the finalisation of Basingstoke's Spatial Strategy remain under review.*

PlanET Invoice *PlanET has categorised their current invoice line items under specific grant headings. The invoice is recommended for payment; however, if the PC requires an exact match between the invoice wording and the grant agreement, the Clerk should notify PlanET accordingly.*

The council discussed the current progress and is in agreement with the steering group's proposals.
The invoice received was accepted for payment.

12. 61/26 Planning

Planning applications *(full details can be found on the BDBC planning portal):*

- 26/02038/HSE Briarwood House Andover Road: Response: No comment.
- 26/00379/FU Land Adjacent To Brackendale Church Lane- this is now at Appeal.

13. 62/26 Financial Matters

a. Accounts for payment

The Clerk presented accounts for payment (see end of Minutes).
Bank reconciliation as at 30 September 2026:
Unity Bank Current Account: £29529.67
Unity Bank Savings Account: £67073.14
Total: £**96602.81**

b. Q2 overview

Admin spending is on track, slight underspend.
Maintenance spending is well under budget.
Consideration of amending earmarked reserves for 27/28 to take into account whether or not to pursue Glebe.

14. 63/26 Items to take forward to subsequent meetings

Policies and procedures: Fire hydrants. Emergency plan review incl fire risks. Glebe.

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 10 November 2026

Actions from 13 October 2026 Meeting

Number	Action	Person
54/26	Clerk to organise training for Cllr Dixon.	**Clerk**
59/26	Clerk to send policies to Litter Warden.	**Clerk**

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