

**PARISH OF MINSTEAD
ANNUAL PARISHIONERS' MEETING**

**Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING of the Parish of Bramshaw
held in the main hall of Bramshaw Village Hall on
Tuesday 24th March 2026 at 18:30 hrs**

DRAFT MINUTES

All minutes are draft until ratified at the next meeting

1. Attendance Register and Apologies

• Present

- Cllr Medley
- Cllr Thomas
- Cllr Coutts
- Cllr Bennison

• In attendance

- Diana O'Grady, Clerk and RFO
- District Cllr Reilly
- Richard Knott
- 5 members of the public

• Apologies

- District Cllr Tipp.

2. To receive the report from Chief Operations Officer / Deputy Chief Executive of New Forest District Council, Richard Knott

Richard Knott informed the meeting of the timetable for Local Government Reorganisation. The reorganisation will see the end of New Forest District Council (NFDC) as it is now; the area will become part of a much larger Unitary Council led by a Mayor. The model is for each Mayoral unitary area to represent 500,000 residents. Vesting day (when everything will be finalised and the new Council will take over) will be 1st April 2028. There will be a mirror Council which will look at transport and housing across the Solent area. There is much disagreement around Hampshire regarding which areas should combine. Richard explained the visions each of the areas in Hampshire had for the future and the shapes of the proposals put forward to the Government. Following the decision made by the government, elections will be held for a shadow Council in 2027. The shadow council will run alongside the current NFDC for 1 year. The councillors elected to the shadow council will sit for 5 years from 1st April 2027. It will be important to keep the needs and views of people represented through local councils going forward. To this end the town and parish councils will not be affected at this stage. NFDC are looking at their assets and wanting to protect their value to residents in the future. The NPA remains but could be split depending on what happens to Test Valley and to Waterside.

3. To approve the Minutes of the Annual Parishioners’ Meeting 2025

The minutes were agreed by those who were present and were signed and dated by the chair.

4. To receive the Annual Report by the Chairman

- Thank you all for coming along to this year’s Annual Parishioners’ Meeting.
- Looking back over the past year, we’ve dealt with the usual mix of potholes, ditches, planning applications and flooding. But through it all, there’s been a lot of hard work quietly happening behind the scenes.
- I’d like to take a moment to thank our parish councillors and volunteers who give their time and energy so generously.
- We’ve made some progress this year in:
 - Broadband with Wessex Internet and OpenReach showing a bit more interest in providing better connections to the wider world
 - Liaising with Hampshire highways and various other parties to address drainage issues.
- Traffic calming continues to be an area of interest;
 - We have now been granted funding for a new ANPR Bramshaw Speedwatch kit.
 - We also hope to have mobile speed indicator devices placed in the village.
 - We are considering how we can fund permanent Speed Indicator Devices in the village
 - We are in the process of establishing a formal Bramshaw Speedwatch Group.
- Looking ahead, we know there is more to do from addressing issues in local infrastructure to addressing planning concerns and advocating for our residents, to ensure Bramshaw remains a safe, vibrant, and well-represented parish.
- Some of these issues remain a challenge, particularly the flooding and drainage and the increase in traffic which continue to blight a number of our residents.
- We will continue to ensure that the voices of residents remain at the heart of our decisions.
- This meeting is not just about reporting back—it’s also an opportunity to listen. Your views, ideas, and concerns are vital in shaping the future of our parish, so I encourage you all to take part in the discussion.
- Finally, thank you once again for your continued support and commitment to our community.

5. To receive the Financial Statement by the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

- The Council’s finances remain sound with a balance in excess of £14,000 including reserves.
- As well as budgeting for expenses relating to council administration and normal maintenance within the parish, the Council is obliged to hold £5,500 as general reserves.
- Council has increased the precept request from £11,000 to £11,500 for the coming year, 2026-2027. This was necessary to keep up with inflation and results in an increase in Council tax of £0.96pa on a band D property.
- Grants were received this year from:
 - HCC to support HCC Parish Lengthsman Scheme: £1100 towards Lengthsman costs; this is expected to continue into 2026 – 2027 and 2027-2028.
- The clerk is attempting to secure a ‘go to’ person for Lengthsman work rather than looking around each time work needs to be done.
- The Parish Council made grants and donations in the year 2025-2026 to Bramshaw Parochial Church council and Citizens Advice New Forest, totalling £450.00
- The total Parish Council expenditure to 17th March in 2025-2026 was £9,215 ex VAT
- The Parish Council assets are estimated to hold a value of over £6,000 and are adequately insured.

Signed Chair Date

- Audit of the governance of Bramshaw Parish Council and the accounts for financial year ending 31 March 2026 will be carried out in May 2026.
- You can view the Parish Council finances yourself at any time on the Bramshaw Parish Council website, with details published monthly in the minutes.
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6. To receive the Report by/from Hampshire County Councillor Edward HERON

- None received

7. To receive the Report by/from New Forest District Councillors Derek Tipp and Joe Reilly

- **CLlr Tipp.** The Council produced a balanced budget for 2026 – 27 despite receiving a disappointing settlement from the Government. Expected additional funding for bringing in a food waste collection and a share of the packaging tax were said to be “included within the settlement”. Council tax was increased by the maximum amount allowed without holding a referendum, 3%. Looking ahead deficits are predicted. Unless savings can be found we will be facing a £3.4 million deficit by 2029.
- The biggest NFDC project over the past year has been the change to our waste collection service with the introduction of a weekly food waste collection service along with the new wheelie-bin collection for recycling and non-recycling on an alternate weekly basis. After some early teething problems this change has now settled in for two areas already, with the final area including most parts of Bramshaw Parish to be joining in in May 2026.
- Another major project for NFDC is the review of the Local Plan. The Council is the planning authority for the parts of the district outside the National Park. As Bramshaw Parish is within the National Park it is covered by their Local Plan which is also being reviewed at the same time. Both plans are expected to be submitted to the government by the end of 2026. They will then be examined in a public hearing by a planning inspector in 2027. A major issue for the Council is the very high housing delivery target set by the government of over 1500 homes per year. This looks well beyond what is possible in our highly constrained area.
- The Government announcement approximately one year ago that local government in Hampshire was going to be re-organised was a major blow to the Council and it has been a constant concern that we would be merged into a much larger unitary authority where the voice of our residents would receive less attention. There was no way we could avoid being part of this and so we have put the strongest possible case for us to be part of a rural-focused authority by joining with Test Valley, Winchester and East Hampshire. The outcome will be announced in a few days’ time, possibly on Friday. Whatever the outcome council services will continue, and we will work with our chosen partners to get the best we can for residents.
- Fly-tipping is a constant concern causing significant cost to clear up and has been on the increase as the cost of waste disposal keeps increasing. The Council is now using covert CCTV surveillance with some success already. Recently checks have been carried out on vehicles containing waste to see if the driver has the correct waste license. We are hoping that these measures along with successful prosecutions and large fines will act as a deterrent.
- Council housing continues to be a successful service with generally high levels of tenant satisfaction. The stock is in a well-maintained condition and issues are dealt with quickly by our well-trained workforce. My own experience, as a councillor bears this out and there is a real pride across the Council in its Housing Service.
- Finally, I will just mention the Economic Development team which is working hard to promote our businesses across the district by organising training events for people starting new businesses as well as for those seeking employment. New ways to improve our high streets, using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds collected from developers are also being developed.

- Cllr Reilly gave an update on the waste collection changes.
- Phase 3 is starting now with bins being delivered.

8. Items requested by public and any questions

- A member of the public reported that stiles and a bridge are broken and agreed to send details of the damage and locations to the Parish Clerk so that further actions can be taken.
 - ~~When the locations are know the Parish Council will report the damaged items to Hampshire County Council.~~
- The old garage ~~is a~~continues to be a blight on the village.
 - The Parish Council will try to find what is going on with the site.
- The drain to the right of the Bentley ~~G~~garage has been repaired but the pipe going into it is blocked further down is still blocked. This matter has been reported to Hampshire Highways.
- ~~The~~re has been a noticeable increase in the noise from the ~~garage~~Bentley Garage test driving ~~vehicles. Maclarens is unacceptable. The~~
- ~~The~~ Parish Council will ~~send a letter of complain~~raise the matter with the garage.
- ~~The~~ night lighting at Bentley Garage is too bright, again the Parish Council will raise the matter with the garage.
- A thanks from the Parochial Church Council in advance for the grant on the agenda for the next Ordinary meeting.

Meeting closed at 20:07

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council will be held immediately following this meeting.

The next Annual Parishioners' Meeting will be on Tuesday 16th March 2027 at 1930hrs.

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Signed Chair Date