



DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7pm on Monday 17th March 2025

<p>Present: Cllr Deborah Harwood (Chairman) (DH); Cllr Graham Zacharias (GZ); Cllr Tony Marshall; Cllr Jeremy Rigby (JR); Cllr Karen Nash (KN); Cllr Peter Gattrell (PG) Cllr Jasmine Hathaway (MJH); Cllr Mark Rawlings-Smith (MRS); Cllr Jeremy Hunt (JH WSCC); Cllr Henry Potter (HP CDC) 6 members of the public also attended.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 1 – Apologies for Absence –</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 2 – Co-Option of two new councillors – Jasmine Hathaway and Mark Rawlings-Smith gave short presentations to introduce themselves and their interests. There was a unanimous vote to co-opt both Jasmine and Mark onto the council.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 3 – Declaration of Interests/ Dispensation Requests - There were no declarations of interest or dispensation requests.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 4 - Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting – to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 20th January 2025. It was Resolved that that the minutes were correct, all councillors agreed, GZ signed the minutes.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 5 – Chairmans Report – DH reported that there was a planning meeting held to discuss the application from Star Energy who own the Singleton Oil Field. The parish council did not receive notification of this application, however, the date for comments has been extended so that we can submit our comments to the SDNP. Our comments can be found on the SDNP Planning Portal. She suggested that MOP’s should read it and that individuals can also submit their comments on the site. A meeting needs to be arranged to discuss councillor responsibilities, so can all councillors submit dates when they are available over the next couple of weeks.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 6 - County Councillor Report – Mr Jeremy Hunt, Chichester North Division WSCC Budget 2025/26 - We have agreed a balanced budget for the year ahead which provides support for the most vulnerable, without cuts to frontline services. In the coming year, we will spend more than £2.2bn on vital services, including: £1,284m for schools, education, and children’s social care £553m to care for adults and keep people healthy £98m to protect the environment, recycling and waste disposal £87m to maintain roads and provide transport £65m for Fire and Rescue services and support for communities £5m to support the local economy The pressures facing us outweigh the funding we receive from government, and we were able to achieve a balanced budget by reducing spending by £12.3m, and an increase in council tax of 4.99% (2% for adults’ social care and 2.99% for general fund services). The increase in council tax for a Band D property is £85.59 per year or approximately £1.65 per week. Having said that, there are huge pressures coming through from Social care - both in Adults services and Childrens services. However much work both adults and Children’s services do, in trying to meet the ever growing pressures, we are struggling to keep the costs under control in the face of ever growing demand. As well as that increasing demand, we are also faced with the ever increasing costs</p>	

of sourcing and providing many of the services we need to support those residents. And with the looming increases in NI and the NLW, these financial pressures are only going to increase. This is not just an issue in West Sussex, but it is a national one which will have severe repercussions on council's right across the country - even well managed ones like West Sussex - unless the Government tackles the problem now.

[More information](#)

Devolution: have your say on plans for Sussex - Sussex has moved a step closer to gaining new powers and investment for local communities. [The government has approved a joint bid](#) between West Sussex County Council, East Sussex County Council, and Brighton & Hove City Council to be a priority for devolution. It means the county as a whole will have an elected mayor to lead on big issues such as transport, public safety, health, housing, the economy and the environment. Now is your chance to have your say on the plans for a Mayoral Combined Authority for Sussex and Brighton. [Take part in the government consultation.](#)

[Read more on devolution](#)

Welcome to Experience Sussex - We're excited to introduce Experience Sussex – your ultimate guide to discovering the best of Sussex! Formerly Experience West Sussex, the website has been transformed to offer even more ways to explore, experience, and enjoy the area. If you're looking for fun days out our [Things to Do](#) section is packed with ideas, from family attractions and historic sites to thrilling activities for all ages. Check out [What's On](#) for the latest events, festivals, and theatre in Sussex, or if you are planning a visit for friends and family our [Trip Builder](#) makes it easy to create a tailor-made itinerary, just click the heart icon on your favourite places to start. If you need inspiration, explore our [Ideas and Inspiration](#) section, where you'll find blogs, news, and discover new places right on your doorstep. And you can use our [Food & Drink](#) search to find great dining spots, hidden gems, and dog friendly pubs in your local area. Start exploring via the link below or follow @experiencesussex. Share your own adventures with us using #ExperienceSussex.

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Commute Zero Hero Awards 2025 Winner - WSCC's Active Travel team are winners of [Mobilityways Commute Zero Hero 2025](#) Active Travel Champion Award!

The Commute Zero Hero Awards honour organisations and individuals driving innovative commuting solutions that reduce carbon emissions and foster a culture of sustainability. West Sussex County Council has been recognised for its Active Travel Strategy prioritising school journeys. WSCC is committed to making sustainable travel journeys a safer, more convenient and more accessible option for our residents and visitors alike. A cornerstone of this commitment is our approach to

Active Travel and in recognition of this work we were awarded Level 1 Capability status by Active Travel England last autumn. The award allows us to continue building on the progress made in recent years by bidding for funding to deliver on our ambition. A key focus for WSCC is building the habit of travelling actively from a young age. Our Active Travel to School programme involves providing site-specific improvements, such as new or upgraded crossing points, widened footways, segregated cycle tracks and behavioural change interventions to enable children and their parents to travel actively for the school run. We have also introduced School Streets at a small number of locations as part of a pilot programme which aims to reduce traffic and make the space outside the school gate safer. By restricting traffic on roads outside schools during drop-off and pick-up times, these areas become pedestrian and cycle priority zones. Although not all locations are suitable for a School Street we are committed to delivering more of them in future. Active Travel is much more than just an investment in new pavements, crossings and cycle paths. It's about providing our residents with the ability to choose to walk, wheel or cycle instead of using their cars for journeys to school, work and many more destinations.

West Sussex County Council is proud to support Food Waste Action Week, a national initiative which is part of the Waste and Resources Action Programme 's (WRAP) Love Food Hate Waste campaign, running from **17 to 23 March 2025**. The campaign raises awareness of the environmental and financial impact of food waste, while encouraging local residents to make simple, cost-saving changes that can help reduce waste. Research suggests that wasted food costs an average of £20 per person per month—or £80 for a family of four. In West Sussex, food waste makes up around a third of the average household rubbish, with 70% of that being edible before getting thrown away. This year, the focus of Food Waste Action Week is on reducing packaging by encouraging shoppers to buy loose fruit and vegetables. Removing unnecessary plastic packaging from uncut fresh fruit and vegetables allows shoppers to buy the exact quantity they need, cutting down on both food and plastic waste.

To support this effort, WRAP is proposing a packaging ban on 21 fruit and vegetable items. Developed in collaboration with industry stakeholders across the supply chain, this proposal will undergo formal consultation. If implemented, it could prevent approximately 100,000 tonnes of edible fruit and vegetables from being wasted annually in homes across the UK, as well as reducing 13,000 tonnes of plastic film waste. To drive action across the UK food system and address challenges faced by the industry, WRAP has emphasised that policy changes like these are essential.

In West Sussex, we know that much of the food waste in our rubbish bins could have been avoided. In fact, 70% could have been eaten at some point prior to being thrown away. Of that, 41% is just not used in time and 25% is binned because too much has been cooked. Our Council Plan is underpinned by a commitment to protect the environment. By supporting Food Waste Action Week, we aim to reduce the amount of edible food ending up in general waste and encourage sustainable shopping habits.

Alongside a social media push, West Sussex Recycles will support the campaign by hosting waste prevention stands and giving away free waste prevention tools at various community events. Local events are as follows:

Oving Community Food Hub – Tuesday, 18 March 2025

Worthing Community Food Hub – Thursday, 20 March 2025

Worthing Library – Saturday, 22 March 2025

Bognor Community Food Hub – Wednesday, 2 April 2025

Petworth Community Food Hub – Thursday, 3 April 2025

For full event details, visit: [Events - West Sussex County Council](#)

To learn more about West Sussex County Council's Fight Against Food Waste and how you can support Food Waste Action Week, visit: [Fight against food waste - West Sussex County Council](#)

Local Issues.

Charlton 20MPH Scheme – JH reported that there are 3 or 4 objections to the scheme, these are trying to be resolved. If this is not successful, the decision will be taken by JH as to whether the

scheme will go ahead and in what form. TM confirmed that there would not be any roundels on the roads through Charlton, there would be some small signs.

Singleton CH Scheme - hopefully this excellent scheme, proposed by the PC and implemented by WSCC Highways, is now complete. I know there were a few snagging details, but hopefully these have now been ironed out.

To clarify the 20mph roundels are the small version. It was agreed that they had now dulled down and were not so 'in your face'. DH commented that the only ones that were still causing concern were the ones in Cobblers Row. With regard to the coloured road surface to highlight the courtesy crossings, JH reported that a decision was taken by senior directors some time ago that this would no longer be installed because of the cost of ongoing maintenance and also that it could give a false sense of security to pedestrians crossing the road. It was agreed by all councillors that they are very grateful for all the work that has been carried out and they thanked JH for all his help.

Southern Water - I'm delighted to see that work is now progressing down to Bankside.

Finally, please don't forget to keep an eye on our website, especially our news and campaigns page where you can keep up to date with all our latest news. <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/news-and-campaigns/>

GZ raised the question of food recycle bins. JH reported that it was a cost issue and that WSCC are hoping that the government will fund the scheme. It is happening, the government has said that the scheme has to be in place by 31st March 2026. DH asked how often would the food waste be collected. There is no information about this at the moment, however, in other counties it is weekly. There is some talk about the scheme being in place by September.

Agenda Item 7 – District Councillor Report – Henry Potter, Goodwood Ward

The Cabinet of the CDC have thrown themselves in with WSCC supporting the early application to be considered for "Fast Track" inclusion in the proposal to Devolve more Power to regions in the form of Unitary Authorities. This, you might note, was done with no consideration for the electorate nor any form of consultation. Democracy has gone out of the window. On top of that, these local Authorities are expected to present a report on their vision for our futures by 21st March, in 3 weeks! What chance will we, the Electorate, have when fuller details of Devolution are still being worked on. Our Councils are in the dark and are expected to forecast our futures??

The Full Council met on Tuesday 25th and the Agenda was essentially the Annual Budget setting for the forthcoming year '25/'26. The Net budget requirement was agreed at £20,366,000 and this represents an increase of £5.58 for a Band D taxpayer which, at 2.99% is well below the threshold when a referendum would be necessary. As the billing Authority, CDC collects the tax in its area for WSCC and the PCC (Sussex Police) who incidentally raised their precept to £15,937,996, an increase of 5.54% on the previous year! A Band D tax payer will contribute £266.91 towards the policing of our District. If only the service were to improve! For comparison, a Singleton Band D taxpayer will be paying £299.73 toward the District and Parish precepts, the Parish segment is £107.67. Band D is always quoted for guidance as it is midway between A and H. So, nothing too bad about this budget, imagine being in an Area where the Government have allowed the removal of the 5% cap on budgetary constraints.

At the same Budget meeting it was agreed to release sums of monies to support various projects through the coming year, £600,000 to assist WSCC Highways to remedy the hundreds of uneven paving stones in the City, we noted there is nothing coming from the City Council! Money to improve the facilities at Westhampnett Services due to enlarging the refuse collection fleet, a further freighter

is needed solely for waste food collections from food outlets, and the entire fleet will in future use Hydrogenated Diesel fuel which is “greener” but will up the fuel costs by £85,000 per annum. And there is to be further excavations in Priory Park following on from the recent excavations which revealed interesting artifacts.

The issue of the cost to us all of the changes to the charging on National Insurance contributions is now apparent. The cost to CDC will be £545,000 this coming year and the Government have awarded us £110,000 by way of compensation! BUT ONLY FOR THIS COMING YEAR! Thereafter your taxes will have to rise to meet this draconian increase. CDC have contained this increase for this year as have you, the Parish Council. It will be a different story next year! The cost to Boxgrove who pay the Clerk the statutory LGA rate is going to be £670.00 per annum, ultimately needing a rise in the annual precept. Further taxation by the ‘back door!’

HP/JH spoke about the re-organisation of local government. A consultation will take place during July with the final submission to be completed in September. Shadow Unitary Councils will be in place for a year before final elections take place in May 2028, when the District Council and County Council will disappear. Shadow Unitary Council elections will take place in May’27, these Councils will run until May’28. Responsibility for The Police and Crime position will transfer to the Mayor, along with the responsibility for Fire and Rescue. JR showed concern about what the impact of extra admin and responsibilities on Parish Councils might be. JH reported that there will be a White Paper giving guidance on the role of the Parish Council in the summer.

Agenda Item 8 – Public Open Forum

Kate Whitton from Western Sussex Rivers Trust asked if the parish council were taking part in No Mow May, this scheme was bought in to allow wild flowers to grow for pollinators and create a habitat for vertebrates etc. There was a discussion about the areas the parish council are responsible for, we are already leaving a metre on the edge of the pond uncut. The other grass areas are only cut every two weeks, It was felt that there were no other areas that could not be mown in May. This discussion then led onto the cutting of hedges, in particular the hedge in the Glebe Field. There was major work carried out a couple of years ago to bring the hedge back under control, The hedges are now trimmed once a year in the Autumn. It was suggested that KW could suggest where we could introduce more hedging. DH said that Goodwood are trying to improve the quality of the hedges on the Goodwood Estate. They will be coppicing the hedge along the Charlton/Singleton road in the future to improve the impact on the river. KW also spoke about the river testing score cards, these are produced annually from information submitted by the River Monitors. Currently the River Lavant is very poor in our area. You can access this information at <https://wsrt.org.uk/get-involved/water-monitoring/river-health-scorecards>. An MOP asked if these results corresponded with Southern Water testing results. Southern Water publish water levels each week but they are not carrying out water testing as this only happens when they are pumping into the river and this hasn’t happened this year. KW stated that water abstraction is a problem and needs to be reduced. Interestingly this area does not have to consider water neutrality when submitting a planning application. An MOP thanked the parish council for submitting a comment on the Singleton Oil Field application. A further comment is being produced as a response to feedback received from the planning officer. TM will address the comments given in the feedback. JH has been communicating with the Fire and Rescue team as they were not aware of the application. STOP PRESS The application will be considered at a Planning Meeting on 10th July.

Agenda Item 9 - Council Matters–

Maintenance Equipment for Charlton – It was agreed to fund the purchase of a hole digger for clearing the drain near the war memorial at Charlton. This will be owned by the parish council but the Charlton resident who kindly clears the drain will keep it at his house.

Flag – it was agreed to purchase a new Union Jack flag as the original one has become worn out and the fixings no longer work.

Tommy Statue - CDC have given the parish council a grant for purchasing a new Tommy statue to commemorate VE80. The current black silhouette Tommy is in a poor state and the suggestion is that we purchase a rusty metal one as it is more in keeping with the SDNP signs. The councillors all agreed to this purchase. It was also agreed that it would be positioned by the pond. If the old Tommy can be repaired this will be moved to the Charlton war memorial.

Agenda Item10 – Village Matters

2025 Event – DH suggested that as we have held previous events around ‘Lest We Forget’ that we hold a Village Party this year. It was agreed to hold the party on the 28th June. MJH will head up a working party to include interested members of the parish. PG reported that there was little interest from younger members of the parish to be involved, unless they could organise the event so that it could go on their CV.

The Leys Parking – JR reported that Landbuild have visited the site and couldn’t see any problem, their comment was that they had recommended having a shingle base not grass, however, highways would not let us have shingle. It was agreed that JR would ask them to visit again and he would accompany them with a walk round.

Southern Water/River Testing Results – KN reported that the sealing of pipes was going well and most of the equipment has been removed from the meadow. She will contact Floyd about the remaining equipment. The large containers are awaiting the crane to remove them. We will hear soon as to when the sealing of pipes will begin in Singleton. With regard to water testing, this has been done each month that the river has been running, the results are not too bad apart from high nitrates and no evidence of wildlife. Kate Whitton will meet with Paul our water monitor to discuss sites for water testing to establish where the nitrates are infiltrating the river.

JR reported some late information about the Centurion Way, it will not now open in the Spring but in late Summer, this is due to some planning issues at the old railway station in Singleton..

Agenda Item11 – Finance

Total in Current Account (17/03/25) – £7,778.01
 Current Reserves (held in the Current Account) – £1,587.74
 General Maintenance £1,110.20.
 School Parking – £84.86
 Playground Maintenance - £392.68
 Total Available in Current Account - £6,190.27
 Balance in Savings Account – £7,203.70
 VAT to be Claimed - £2,228.91

Meeting Closed – 20.36

Confirmed that these minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed: DEBORAH HARWOOD
 Name & Position: CHAIRMAN
 Date: