

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WINCHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Cllr Meyrick Williams (Chairman), Cllr Cepta Hamm and Cllr Louise Hodgetts
(Winchfield Parish Council – WPC)
8 Members of the public
Litter Pick Co-ordinator
Mrs Alison Ball (Clerk)

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting advising that he needed to report the sad news that a member of the community, Mike Garwood, had recently passed away. Condolences were expressed to the family including Mike's wife who was in attendance at the meeting. The Chairman advised what a loved and respected member of the community Mike was and that he would be missed.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Richard Milnes-James and Kate Stewart (WPC).

Apologies were also received from Cllr Tim Davies, Hampshire County Council (HCC), Cllrs Anne Crampton, Tim Southern and Spencer Farmer, Hart District Council (HDC), the Footpaths Warden and members of the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATIONS
UNDER S33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT 2011**

None.

3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman advised that the draft Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2025 needed to be amended at Minute 18.2 to remove the sentence "It was noted that the owners of the other plots of land along this strip had been advised that the legal decisions in this case would also apply to them and their land." He was mistaken when he said this and it was not factually correct.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21 July 2025 be approved, subject to the above amendment, and signed as a correct record.

5 MATTERS ARISING

None.

6 HAMPSHIRE DEVOLUTION & LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Chairman introduced the item reminding everyone of the difference between Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Devolution was the transfer of powers from Whitehall to local areas by creating regional Strategic Authorities with an

elected Mayor. This was moving ahead in Hampshire and elections for the new Mayor would be held in May 2026.

LGR was the replacement of the current two-tier system of county and district councils with unitary councils across the country. In Hampshire the 11 district councils, HCC, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and Isle of Wight Council would all be replaced with new unitary councils. There would be no changes to town and parish councils and Winchfield Parish Council would remain.

All councils affected needed to submit details of proposed unitary councils to the Government by September 2025 with elections to the new councils in May 2027. The councils would exist as shadow councils for a year and become the only tier of council from May 2028.

Over the last few months councils had been working on preferred options for Hampshire. It had not been possible for all councils in Hampshire to agree a single vision and as such there were two competing options – one from HCC and East Hampshire District Council; the other from all 12 other councils in Hampshire including HDC. Slides were displayed at the meeting which showed the two competing options.

HCC and East Hampshire were recommending four unitary councils with the county separated into North and Mid Hampshire; South-West; South-East and the Isle of Wight. Winchfield would fall into the North and Mid Hampshire Unitary Council which would be made up of Basingstoke and Deane, East Hampshire, Hart, Rushmoor and Winchester. This was a large area with a population of around 656,000.

The alternative proposal from the 12 other councils in Hampshire including HDC set out three options all of which recommended the creation of five unitary councils. In all the options one of these unitary councils included a north unitary council covering Basingstoke and Deane, Hart and Rushmoor covering 407,465 residents. The main difference between the options concerned the placement of the New Forest.

All the information was available on the Parish Council website which provided links to the relevant pages on the HDC and HCC websites.

The proposals would be submitted to the Government by the end of September and it was expected that the Government would hold its own public consultation in November 2025. By March 2026 the Government would announce the future structure with new legislation in the summer/autumn 2026. In May 2027 there would be elections for the new unitary councils which would exist in shadow form for 12 months before formally taking over in May 2028.

The Parish Council had submitted comments on all proposals. In these comments WPC had asked that consideration be given to the creation of Neighbourhood Committees at any new authority so that local decisions would be made by local councillors.

It was unclear whether the recent change in the person appointed as the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government would have any impact on the processes relating to LGR or Devolution. It was expected that the changes would impact on the development of the Local Plan but again it was unclear at this stage in what way.

7 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The meeting was reminded that at the meetings in May and July it had been reported that HDC had conducted a Community Governance Review which sought views on the current set up and arrangement of parish councils. A Community Governance Review could result in the creation of new parish councils, the merging or grouping of existing parish councils, or the abolishment of a parish council. It could also result in a change of name for a parish council or the electoral arrangements. The review was being conducted by HDC at the current time, partly because a review was due but also because it would be important for parish and town councils to make sure that they would be fit for purpose following the introduction of the changes that would come about as part of LGR.

WPC had submitted comments in response to two consultations related to the Community Governance Review and in the second response had requested that the number of councillors elected to the Parish Council be increased from five to seven. This recommendation was made after considering the NALC (National Association of Local Councils) guidance which suggested that a parish the size of WPC should have seven councillors and a belief that there would likely be an increase in workload in the coming years with a possible increase in population. It was felt that having two additional councillors would help to share the workload.

HDC had recently published its final report which would be considered by the HDC full Council on Thursday 25 September. In this report it was recommended, amongst other things, that the number of parish councillors at Winchfield be increased to seven. If approved this change would come in for the elections in May 2027. The Chairman asked if anyone was interested in becoming a councillor to get in touch.

Once in place the new unitary authority would be asked to conduct another Community Governance Review after two years to make sure that any arrangements were still appropriate.

8 HIGHWAYS REPORT

8.1 Updates from HCC Highways:

There had not been an update from Hampshire Highways since the last meeting.

8.2 Flooding on the Highway

After the last meeting a report was made to Hampshire Highways about the drains on Station Road, under the bridge, as they were full of silt which would cause flooding next time it rained. The clearance had partially been carried out but when the ditches had been cleared the silt had refilled the drains. There were also marking on the road for works that did not appear to have been completed. This had been reported to the Highways Manager who had confirmed he would carry out a site visit. Cllr Hamm would try to be present at this site visit.

8.3 Update on the Barley Mow Junction

Cllr Hodgetts confirmed that an application had been made to the HCC Community Funded Initiative (CFI) scheme for the proposed changes to the Pale Lane, Chatter Alley and The Hurst junction. The proposals included extending the white lines on Pale Lane out further towards The Hurst/Chatter Alley so that vehicles waiting to exit Pale Lane would be beyond the pub building increasing the site lines.

Now that the application had been made it would be reviewed by Hampshire Highways to

check that it met the criteria to be a CFI and if so an invoice would be issued to WPC for the £850 scoping fee, this expenditure had been approved by WPC in July 2025. Once the application had been accepted and the fee paid, a desktop study would be conducted and if the proposal was viable a concept plan would be produced along with an estimate for the work. WPC would need to evaluate the proposed plan and costings and provide written confirmation to proceed. All costs would need to be paid by WPC. Following WPC approval an engineer would visit the site and produce a fully costed detailed design. Councillors would be able to meet with the engineer if required and only at this stage would timescales be advised. WPC would need to conduct a consultation with the community at this stage and evidence of this needed to be passed to HCC before any changes would be implemented. The public consultation could involve publishing details in the newsletter, a letter drop and/or a public meeting. Hampshire Highways had put a caveat on the project that the workload for officers remained high and this would have to be prioritised accordingly.

8.4 B3016/ Accidents

After agreement at the meeting in March a letter had been sent to HCC requesting that the 50mph zone on the B3016 be reviewed with the intention of extending the limit and/or reducing the limit to 40mph. A response had been received which advised that HCC had identified an emerging pattern of collisions in the area surrounding the pet crematorium and that the Casualty Reduction Team would add the section of road to the programme for further investigation.

Despite communication by WPC no further updates had been received from HCC. It was agreed that WPC would continue to press for updates on this.

It was noted that traffic monitoring cameras had been put up at various locations in Winchfield and the surrounding areas. Enquiries had been made with HCC to find out what these cameras were for but HCC had claimed no knowledge of the cameras. The company that had placed the cameras had been contacted and it had been advised that the cameras were recording vehicle numbers and speeds for a contractor working on behalf of the council but no specific details of which council could be provided. It was hoped that this could be in relation to the investigation being conducted by the Casualty Reduction Team.

It was noted that white marks had been sprayed on Sprats Hatch Lane and it was hoped that this meant the potholes would be filled in.

It was noted that potholes on Station Road had been reported to HCC and white marks had appeared but the potholes had never been filled and the markings were now faded. This would be followed up.

9 FOOTPATHS REPORT

The Chairman reported that a car had been set on fire at the entrance to Footpath 1 which had spread to a hedge and the fingerpost. Fortunately no one had been hurt and the gate had been untouched. A replacement fingerpost and some postcrete had been provided by HCC which would be put in as soon as possible.

There needed to be some cutting back on Hook byway 1 which would be carried out by the ramblers. Cutting back on footpaths 8, 501 and 3 would be done by the Parish Council's contractor.

10 NEWSLETTER

The draft autumn newsletter had been circulated to councillors for comments. There was a lot of information in this edition. It would be with the designer by the end of the week and hopefully ready to print early October with distribution after the 11 October.

11 GREENING CAMPAIGN

Cllr Hamm advised that the Greening Campaign activities had slowed during the summer months. The new planters had been placed outside the Village Hall and these had been filled with plants. Planters had also been offered to the local pubs and the Station. One of the pubs had accepted the planters with the other advising it already had lots of planters. There had not been any response from network rail.

Work was ongoing with Dogmersfield School following the successful poster competition for pupils. Thought was being put into how it would be possible to create vegetable patches at the school.

Cllr Hamm would be meeting with the Waste Pillar Lead at the Greening Campaign and this may result in some new ideas.

RESOLVED: That up to £250 be set aside for the purchase of plaques to be placed on the planters identifying the Parish Council as the donor and the Greening Campaign as the project.

12 NEW BENCHES AND INFORMATION BOARDS

Work was ongoing on the new information boards and an update would be brought to the next meeting.

13 LITTER PICK

The Litter Pick Co-ordinator confirmed that the date for the autumn litter pick would be Sunday 23 November.

14 UPDATE ON THE SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE

Cllr Hodgetts advised that the new solar powered SID at the Hurst had not needed a battery change yet which showed that the solar power was working really well. She expressed thanks to the volunteers at the Barley Mow who had been rotating the SID on a regular basis. Reports from the SID would be available on the WPC website shortly.

Research was ongoing into the type of SID that should be purchased for rotation around the Station Road locations. A model has been identified and Cllr Hodgetts would be attending the manufacturers showroom at the end of September to test out the portability of the SID before purchasing. The purchase of this SID would be mostly funded by the PPC group – the road haulage business on Station Road.

15 UPDATE ON THE DEFIBRILLATORS

Cllr Hodgetts thanked the guardians for continuing to check all the defibrillators on a regular basis. She was happy to report that none of the defibs had been used since the last meeting.

Cllr Hodgetts was trying to get another training session organised. The volunteers from the Rapid Response Team at the Frimley Heath Foundation Trust who had run the previous sessions had confirmed that they did not have the capacity to carry out any further sessions. Cllr Hodgetts was looking at other options and would be making contact with the Hampshire Air Ambulance to see if they could provide any training.

S106 MONEY

The Chairman advised that an application had been made to HDC in June 2025 for s106 funding to cover the cost of the bench that was donated to the residents of Beauclerk Green. A response had not yet been received on this and it would be followed up.

The application to HDC to register the Barley Mow pub and the neighbouring field as an asset of community value had been accepted and the assets would remain on the list for five years. This was subject to appeal, with the deadline for an appeal to be lodged being 24 October. During the consultation phase no comments had been made by Punch Taverns.

Members of the Winchfield Festival Committee were continuing to work on the proposal to carry out remedial works to the field next to the Barley Mow to make it more useable for community events. In May 2025 the Parish Council had agreed to support this project with some funding. It was now being suggested that the full funding for this project, £4,000, be sought from the s106 money held by HDC.

RESOLVED: To support an application from the Winchfield Festival to HDC for s106 funding of £4,000 to be used for remedial works to the recreational field next to the Barley Mow to allow it to be used for community events.

The Chairman invited the Treasurer of St Mary's Winchfield PCC to address the meeting to provide details of a project to install a toilet at the church. He advised that a toilet was needed at the church to encourage greater use of the church, increasing its financial viability and making it better able to serve the community. The PCC felt that the installation of a self-composting toilet was the best solution as it could be housed in a small wooden building and would not need a connection to mains drainage or to a septic tank. It also did not need a water or electricity supply. It was intended that the toilet would be purchased from NatSol, the leading UK provider of self-composting toilets. An example of one of these toilets could be seen at All Saints Church in Dogmersfield. It was proposed that the toilet would be located within the graveyard boundary but in a currently unused area beyond any graves. In order to achieve this a pathway that already existed would need to be extended. A summary of the costs involved was presented showing a total cost of £15,726 excluding VAT. This figure included the toilet with wooden building, delivery, installation, extension of the pathway, internal battery powered light fittings, battery powered path lights and a radar lock and key. It was thought that the benefits of installing a toilet would be that it would make St Mary's more attractive as a location for events such as concerts, recitals, weddings and funerals; attendance at services would not be constrained by lack of toilet facilities; and the installation of a RADAR lock would mean that there would be disabled facilities available at all times. Increased usage of St Mary's would help ensure financial viability of the church and its continuance as a functioning church.

The Church Reverend spoke supporting the proposal for the composting toilet at the church and confirming the view that this facility would make it easier for attendees at events and would encourage use of the church. She felt that the church was an asset for all of the residents of Winchfield and it was at risk if it was not used. The installation of a toilet would help to make sure the church was used and a more inclusive facility.

The Chairman advised that HDC had been approached and it had been confirmed, without prejudice, that this could be a suitable project for s106 funding. This project would be subject to planning permission being granted and approval by the diocese. An application for s106 funding could be made before the planning application as funding could be

awarded subject to the planning application being approved.

A member of the public spoke raising some concerns with regard to whether one toilet would be sufficient when there was an event being held in the church and whether consideration should be given to the installation of a toilet with running water and a septic tank. It was confirmed that this had been considered but the location meant it would be too difficult to empty a septic tank. Another member of the public spoke, supporting the proposal, and advising that when events were being held at the church portaloos had often been used and usually one, maybe two were sufficient.

Cllr Hodgetts raised concerns about the toilet being locked as it would be a good community facility if left unlocked but understood the security and maintenance reasons for doing this. It was intended that cleaning would be linked to events and would be carried out by volunteers. Cllr Hamm was pleased that the toilet would be suitable for use by disabled users and that the access would comply with the requirements for access by a wheelchair. She felt this facility was really needed at the church and she liked the proposed location.

RESOLVED: That an application to HDC for s106 funding for the installation of a compostable toilet at St. Mary's church be supported.

17 EVENTS

Cllr Hamm confirmed the following events:

- the Winchfield Community Choir would be performing at five events between now and Christmas – details would be available soon;
- the Children's Christmas Party would be taking place on 14 December in the Village Hall with presents and refreshments and a visit from santa;
- the Christmas tree would be put up again at the Hurst, supported by a member of the public that lived nearby;
- a new Sunday school would be starting in January, called the Ark. It would be held in the Village Hall and would be an intergenerational café style gathering with a simple meal provided for the children.

In order for these events to run some funding would be needed. It was thought that £150 would be needed for the purchase of gifts and refreshments for the Christmas party; £250 for the purchase of the Christmas tree plus £108.40 for the licence from HCC; and £250 for the new Sunday School to allow them to purchase some equipment to get up and running.

RESOLVED: That up to £800 be allocated for the above events.

18 ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

The Chairman advised that, following approval at the last meeting, an application had been made to HDC to relist the Barley Mow pub and the adjacent cricket field as an asset of community value. HDC had accepted the application and the assets would be listed for a further five years. Now they were listed they could not be sold without the community first being offered the opportunity to buy the asset. This decision was open to appeal until 24 October.

19 PLANNING

19.1 Applications received since the last meeting:

25/01433/AMCON Four Winds, Old Potbridge Road

Application to vary Condition 4 (approved plans) of Planning Permission 24/01116/FUL

dated 14/08/2024 - Demolition of existing 4 bedroom dwelling and outbuilding and erection of a 5 bedroom dwelling, plant shed, bin store and detached garage, replacement front gate and alterations to hardstanding. A detailed response had been submitted before the deadline on 26 August.

19.2 Land North of Winchfield Court

The Chairman reiterated that at the last meeting he had said that the owners of the other plots of land along this strip had been advised that the legal decisions in this case would also apply to them and their land which was incorrect and would be removed from the minutes. He had checked with HDC and it had been confirmed that contact had not been made with the other owners and there was no legal link that would apply the decision to the other plots. Should the owners of the other plots wish to make any changes they would need to apply to HDC for planning permission. The Inspector's appeal decision on adjacent sites would be taken into account.

HDC had confirmed that the remedial works required by the appeal decision had not been fully carried out by the landowner and work was ongoing on how to get this done.

19.3 Chapel Bungalow, Potbridge Road

Officers at HDC were actively working on action with regard to this site but nothing could be reported at the current time.

19.4 Hart District Local Plan Update

Following the Government's announcement to increase housing numbers, the HDC Local Plan needed to be reviewed and updated to make provision for 15,000 homes in Hart in the 20 year period of the plan. A timetable for the work to conduct the review had recently been presented to, and approved by, the HDC Cabinet. The timetable stated that formal notification to start the Local Plan process would happen in February 2026, allowing time for the significant preparatory work to be undertaken. Submission of the Local Plan for Examination was programmed for March 2028. This would coincide with the new unitary council coming into being and the abolition of HDC. In addition, on the completion of the devolution process the new Mayor would take on responsibility for strategic planning decisions which might change the requirements placed on Hart.

The Chairman had attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting at HDC where the draft Local Plan programme had been discussed. He had been permitted to speak at the meeting drawing attention to the Landscape Character Assessment and Key Views documents within the Winchfield Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2037. He requested that in updating the Landscape Character Assessment for the district that these two documents be recognised. To do this he had suggested that the wording in the HDC Local Plan Initiation Document be amended to include a requirement to take into account pre-existing Landscape Character Assessments and Key Views which had been produced in support of Neighbourhood Plans. The Officers at the meeting supported the Chairman in this proposal.

The Chairman advised that it had been brought to his attention that the lengthy document produced by the 12 councils on LGR contained reference to unlocking opportunities for garden community sites.

There had recently been a call for sites, asking landowners to put forward land for potential development. It was unlikely that the details of this would be known until the spring and at this stage it would be clearer what might be proposed for Winchfield.

20 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

20.1 Conclusion of Audit to year end 31 March 2025

The external audit for the year ended 31 March 2025 had been completed and the only matter that was noted related to the legal power used to provide a grant to Citizens Advice Hart. Whilst it was legally acceptable to rely on s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 for giving this grant, this power should be used as a last resort and an alternative power, s142(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, could be used instead. The Clerk had made a note of this and would use this power in future. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit had been displayed both on the Council's noticeboards and on the website.

It was **AGREED** to receive and approve the report of the external auditor contained within section 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25.

20.2 Grants for Approval

A request for a grant had been received from CPRE. Money had been provided in the budget for this grant.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £200 be made to CPRE plus £36 membership fee.

20.3 Payments for Approval

RESOLVED: That the following payments be approved:

Clerk - AB	October Salary	£394.34	LGA 1972 s112
Clerk - AB	November Salary	£394.34	LGA 1972 s112
Clerk – AB	Expenses (WFH Allowance August and September)	£26.00	LGA 1972 s111
Lloyds Bank	Monthly charge for bank account	£4.25	LGA 1972 s111
Basingstoke Canal	Annual Contribution	£250.00	LGA 1972 s144
CPRE	Grant	£200.00	LGA 1972 s137
CPRE	Membership Fee	£36.00	LGA 1972 s137
Winchfield Village Hall	Room Hire September Meeting	£32.00	LGA 1972 s111
Blay Builders	Materials for Planters	£540.00*	Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006 s40
M Williams	Expenses – travel and parking for HCC LG Reorganisation Event	£32.20	LGA 1972 s111
BDO	External Audit	£252.00	LGA 1972 s111
Christine Strudwick	Adobe and new leaflet holders	£112.58	LGA 1972 s111
*Payment already made; expenditure agreed by email and within previously agreed budgets			

21 CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence had been received other than that already forwarded and none that needed addressing that had not appeared elsewhere on the agenda.

22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS *Report Only*

The Chairman reported that Alex Brewer MP had visited Winchfield in August to meet with residents. He had attended this meeting where a variety of issues had been raised and discussed. Full details of all the topics raised could be seen on the WPC website.

Following the meeting the Chairman had written to the MPs office outlining concerns relating to traffic, specifically large HGVs on Station Road. No response had been received to this.

23

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Dates of future meetings were noted: 17 November 2025, 26 January 2026, 16 March 2026, 18 May 2026, 20 July 2026, 21 September 2026 and 16 November 2026 all starting at 7pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm