

LOWER BEEDING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25th February 2025.
The meeting was held at Holy Trinity Church Rooms, Lower Beeding.

Present: Cllrs Bamford (Chair), Scrase-Dickins, Mercer, Keen, Smith, Claridge, Duncley.

Also present: The Clerk (Peter Knox), Cllr Livingstone and one member of the public.

The Chair began the meeting at 19:00 hours.

026/25 Apologies for absence: Cllrs Allen, Fitzpatrick.

Tribute to Cllr Liz Kitchen by The Chair

I was very sorry to hear the news of the passing of Cllr Liz Kitchen. She had for many years represented Lower Beeding on the District and County Council's with great enthusiasm and wisdom. She was first elected to Horsham District Council in 1987. She served as Chairman in 2000 and Leader of the Council from 2001-09. For six years she spent supporting local Parish Councils as a County Councillor from 2013-19.

On a personal level she was a redoubtable source of wise council. She will be greatly missed.

027/25 Approval of minutes for:

- January 2025 Parish Council meeting.

The minutes were approved by Cllr Mercer and seconded by Cllr Keen.

028/25 Meetings attended by Councillors.

Cllr Mercer attended three meetings in relation to Stonehouse Farm.

1/ He attended the Open Day whereby Lee Goosens (owner) gave the neighbours an overview of his plans for the future of Stonehouse Farm. The gathering was well attended with over forty people present.

2/ He also attended with neighbours of Jackson's Farm regarding the future developments on the site.

3/ He contacted Mr Goosens regarding excessive light from one of the buildings. Mr Goosens agreed to shroud the light from the buildings. He will meet Mr Goosens at the end of March for a further review.

029/25 Declaration of Interests.

There were no declarations of interest.

030/25 Report from District Councillor.

Cllr Livingstone reported the following:

- **English Devolution** - The County Council elections scheduled for May have been postponed until May 2026. Both East and West Sussex councils, alongside Brighton council, have agreed to participate in a government-backed devolution programme with an ambitious timeline. It is currently unclear on how this will directly benefit our area. There is a public consultation currently underway.
- **Local Government Reorganisation** -HDC (Horsham District Council) have received a notification from the Minister of State for Local Government inviting tier 2 councils in West Sussex, including HDC, to collaborate on a reorganisation proposal for unitary authorities. The guidance suggests that these new unitary authorities should have populations around 500,000, while HDC currently has only 150,000. While there may be benefits such as economies of scale in this collaboration, he is concerned we could lose the democratic accountability and ward-level representation we currently enjoy. It is likely that there will only be one councillor for every 6000 of population as against the current figure of 2500-3000. The deadline for submitting interim proposals to the government is set

for 21st March which is to basically update the ministry on the work that has been undertaken so far.

- **Horsham District Local Plan** - We find ourselves in a frustrating situation as progress has stalled following the inspector's unexpected suspension of the review process in December. HDC has submitted all requested action points to the inspector and believes it can complete the necessary plan updates within six months. They have also expressed concern about a potential policy vacuum if we have to start afresh, particularly in light of recent government reorganisation proposals. HDC are still awaiting a response from the inspector.
- **Neighbourhood Wardens** - A meeting has been arranged at our new council offices on Friday 21st March for all Ward & Parish Councils
- **Leonardslee Gardens** – He chaired a meeting on the 12th February bringing together officers and cabinet members for planning, environmental health, licensing and economic development. Planning is a problem as the legal aspects of planning are very restrictive, and Environmental Health (EH) also similarly explained their restrictions. EH also stated they had received very few complaints which I immediately responded that wasn't correct and that there had been many complaints over the period of my tenure as councillor and we needed some action. The plan is to put some monitoring into position for noise and a method of recording and reporting for residents to make it easier and clearer. This would consist of a sound level meter located within their property for a period of 14 days. The meter will continuously monitor and provide data including for average, background and peak noise levels.
- **Council Tax** – The CT was set at a recent full council meeting. HDC still has the lowest CT for a district council in Sussex. The increase will be £4.67 a year for Band D.

031/25 Public Adjournment

A member of the public raised the issue of littering on Warninglid Lane and highlighted the amount he had personally picked up. He asked was there a schedule for litter picking? Cllr Livingstone said he would find out in HDC and the Clerk said he would pursue WSCC.

- Please note there was very little activity in the Transport Working Group.

032/25 Other matters arising which are not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Updates:

- **Land Acquisition update** - Cllr Allen was not present at the meeting however Cllr Scrase-Dickins declared she would organise a group to examine the options open for the land for community use.
- **Defib for Village Hall** – a grant of £1,750/- for a defib unit at the Village Hall was approved. The Clerk will draft a list of conditions for the grant.
- **Replacement heaters in Church Room** – The PC debated whether they should fund the replacement heaters in the Church Room. Cllr Keen said she would see if a grant was available from HDC.

033/25 Planning Applications

DC/25/0066 South Lodge Hotel, Brighton Road, Lower Beeding, West Sussex.

Erection of store for vineyard vehicles and associated materials.

The LBPC voted unanimously to remain neutral on the application. The only point raised was regarding the exclusion zone of the great crested newt to be taken into consideration.

034/25 Chair's announcements.

The Chair announced that she had met several people with regard to the future of the primary school in Lower Beeding and also discussed the litter picking problem throughout the Parish.

035/25 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for 2024.

The Clerk had sent updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for review by the PC. They were approved by Cllr Smith and Seconded by Cllr Scrase-Dickins.

036/25 Accounts status as at end of January.

Date	Accounts February 2025	AMOUNT £
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Balance at 28th January 2025

	Treasurers Account - Balance	£57,551.88
	Business Account - Balance	£10,480.54
	32 Day Notice Account	£10,475.28

29-Jan	Warm Spaces - Plough Pub	£420.00
29-Jan	Clerk Expenses	£229.96
29-Jan	Clerk Salary	£1,321.48
17-Feb	MAS Networks	£104.39
	Total Costs	£2,075.83

	Business Account	
10-Feb	Interest	£9.19

	32 Day Notice Account	
19-Feb	Interest	£18.48

Balances at 25th February 2025

	Treasurers Account - Balance	£55,476.05
	Business Account - Balance	£10,489.73
	32 Day Notice Account	£10,493.76

037/25 Outstanding payments.

Date	Outstanding Payments	
	Clerk Salary	£1,250.00
	Clerk Expenses	£20.00
	Total	£1,270.00

Date of the next meetings:

037/25 Planning Meetings –Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 7:00 pm to be held in the Church Rooms Holy Trinity Church, Lower Beeding.

Please note that the planning meetings will only take place if there are any applications to discuss.

038/25 Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 25th March 2025 at 7:00 pm to be held in the Church Rooms Holy Trinity Church, Lower Beeding.

The meeting concluded at 20:12 hrs

Peter Knox

Clerk to Lower Beeding Parish Council

Email: clerk@lowerbeeding.com

ADDENDUM

LBPC Income & Expenditure 2024 / 25		2024										Actual spend 2024/25	Budget Remaining
Expenditure	Precept 2024/25	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December			
		ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL			
Clerks salary	£15,500	£ 1,163.60	£ 1,300.77	£ 1,101.18	£ 1,188.45	£ 1,263.39	£ 1,213.30	£ 1,188.45	£1,392.91	£ 1,191.35	£ 11,003.40	£4,496.60	
Clerks pension	£3,000						£ 1,381.68				£ 1,381.68	£1,618.32	
PAYE / NI	£3,000				£ 1,169.37			£ 1,216.12			£ 2,385.49	£614.51	
Internal Audit	£650		£ 175.50								£ 175.50	£474.50	
External Audit	£260						£ 252.00				£ 252.00	£8.00	
MAS Networks	£1,260	£ 104.39	£ 104.39	£ 104.39	£ 104.39	£ 104.39	£ 104.39	£ 104.39	£ 104.39	£ 104.39	£ 939.51	£320.49	
Website & Software	£80		£ 60.00		£ 279.99						£ 339.99	-£259.99	
Street Lighting	£200				£ 197.11						£ 197.11	£2.89	
Waste Removal	£150	£ 162.00				£ 120.00	£163.80				£ 445.80	-£295.80	
Insurance	£700	£ 682.36									£ 682.36	£17.64	
Training	£150				£ 168.00						£ 168.00	-£18.00	
SALC/HALC/NALC subs	£450	£ 383.06									£ 383.06	£66.94	
Grants	£6,250										£ -	£6,250.00	
Church Room Rental	£600							£ 360.00			£ 360.00	£240.00	
Other	£200	£ 1,704.00									£ 1,704.00	-£1,504.00	
Maintenance	£4,500	£ 88.51	£ 296.49	£ 115.99	£ 260.00	£ 260.00	£ 305.69				£ 1,326.68	£3,173.32	
Traffic management	£0										£ -	£0.00	
Neighbourhood Plan	£0										£ -	£0.00	
Playground inspection report	£150				£ 108.00						£ 108.00	£42.00	
Payroll costs	£180				£ 60.00				£ 60.00		£ 120.00	£60.00	
Expenses	£750	£ 98.11	£ 68.56	£ 84.74	£172.55	£ 65.58	£ 113.10	£ 28.58	£ 310.59	£ 53.78	£ 995.59	-£245.59	
Office Allowance	£960	£ 80.00	£ 80.00	£ 80.00	£ 80.00	£ 80.00	£ 80.00	£ 80.00	£ 80.00	£ 104.39	£ 744.39	£215.61	
Operating Costs	£17,490												
TOTAL	£38,990	£ 4,466.03	£ 2,085.71	£ 1,486.30	£ 3,787.86	£ 1,893.36	£ 3,613.96	£ 2,977.54	£ 1,947.89	£ 1,453.91	£23,712.56	£15,277.44	