

LOWER BEEDING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 30th September 2025

The Meeting was held at Holy Trinity Church Rooms, Lower Beeding

Present: Cllrs Bamford (Chair), Claridge, Allen, Dunckley, Keen, Fitzpatrick

Also Present: Cllrs Livingston & Raby and three members of the public,

(Minutes taken by Cllr Claridge in the absence of the Clerk).

The meeting started at 7:00 pm

103/25 Apologies for absence: Cllr Smith.

104/25 Approval of minutes for July 2025 Parish Council meeting:

The minutes were approved by Cllr Claridge and seconded by the Chair.

105/25 Meetings attended by Councillors

- The Chair & Cllr Fitzpatrick met with our PCSO and Neil Durkan, the neighbourhood Police Inspector in relation to Cisswood House Hotel immigration concerns.
- Cllr Fitzpatrick met with County Cllr Raby with regards to local transport plans.
- Cllr Fitzpatrick attended an LBA meeting at the village hall with regards to a grant application for solar panels.
- Cllr Claridge and the Clerk met with Mike Stevens of Playdale, re playground improvements.

106/25 Declaration of Interests.

Cllr Allen met with District Cllr Dennis Livingstone in relation to the potential development of Padel Courts at Comptons Tennis Club.

107/25 Report from District Councillor.

Cllr Livingstone reported the following:

HDC Local Plan - The Local Plan is very important to all of us and our HDC Plan submission was refuted by the government. A letter has been sent to the planning inspector asking him to reconsider in light of some new evidence that has arisen concerning duty to collaborate. We await his response to the evidence. This situation has been further exacerbated by other nearby authorities in the South of England who, having submitted their plans after the General Election, have also had their plans found to be unsound.

Local Government Re-organisation - The process of local government reorganisation will bring significant changes to how our area is represented, how services are managed, and how they are delivered for our residents. This is evolving and the preferred option from HDC is the amalgamation of Crawley, Horsham and Mid-Sussex which has in principle been agreed by the majority of district and borough councils, however West Sussex County Council prefers the single unitary authority covering all of the existing District Councils.

The full document jointly produced by all the District Councils is available on the HDC web site at www.horsham.gov.uk/devolution-and-lgr/local-government-reorganisation

Neighbourhood Plan – He congratulated the LBPC on approval of their Neighbourhood Plan it will be approved at the next HDC full Council meeting in October.

Stonehouse Farm Planning Application - It is very frustrating that this hasn't moved forward to assessment. Despite meetings with senior planning officers and the Cabinet member for Planning it is still not advanced any further. He will continue to pursue the Planning Department for submission.

108/25 Report from County Councillor

Cllr Raby reported the following:

There are two options for the forthcoming local government reorganisation. In view of the fact the government have the final say next month, he and other councillors were committed to making any solution work for the benefit of the people of Sussex.

The two options for 'devolution' are:

- An east-west division of West Sussex including merging of Horsham, Crawley & Mid Sussex.
- A large authority based on the entirety of the current West Sussex.

We await the decision of the government.

He asked for a list of transport issues to take to his next county highway committee meeting. Cllr Fitzpatrick will update him.

109/25 Public Adjournment:

• Transport Working Party feedback and SiD's update

Cllr Fitzpatrick met with Cllr Raby and other parties and was very hopeful that all of the signage would be installed soon. There was a debate as to whether four or five sets of gateway signs would be installed by West Sussex Highways in conjunction with the speed signs.

110/25 Other matters arising which are not covered elsewhere on the agenda

Updates:

• Cisswood House Hotel

The Chair & Cllr Fitzpatrick updated the council on their meeting with Inspector Durkan. There was no evidence of crime committed in the wider community apart from an assault on an immigrant in Horsham town centre. There has been concern from residents in Crabtree re the number of male immigrants walking in groups in the village. Cllr Allen expressed his deep concern on the suitability of Cisswood House as a migrant reception centre. The Chair and Cllr Keen outlined how the community (the church and LBA) had reached out to the refugees.

• Update on land purchase

Cllr Allen has been unable to progress the legal work because of foreign work commitments. Cllrs Keen & Claridge agreed to follow-up on the progression of the conveyancing

• Playground Equipment repair and quote from Playdale

Cllr Claridge reported the following:

He had provided hardcopies of the quote from Playdale to the PC. Cllr Keen would chase up quotes for fencing and gate repairs. Other options were available, and all options will be put to the public when ownership has been fully established.

He informed the council of all of the tree-work done in the park to remove a dying Ash and dangerous limbs from oaks, etc. The collapsed bench had also been removed from the Brick Kiln Pond area and more voluntary work is planned for this area by the WSCC ranger.

• **Neighbourhood Plan Referendum result**

Cllrs Livingstone and Raby congratulated LBPC on the positive referendum result which will mean it being instated for five years. Our CIL funding would now be increased.

Issue added to the agenda: Stonehouse Farm Update

The owner said his plans were still being debated by HDC Planning. There was a chance that the Class Q (3 Luxury Houses) could be removed from the application and that the anaerobic digester be reinstated. He said he is very frustrated with the planning system. We await the final decision of the planning department. Cllr Livingstone expressed his support for his mixed commercial development, especially considering the amount of local support it had gained.

111/25 Planning Applications:

DC/25/1146 Leonardslee Gardens Brighton Road Lower Beeding West Sussex RH13 6PP

Owing to the extensive detail of the plans, it was decided that the PC position on the plan would be decided at the October planning meeting. The Chair requested that the Clerk invite the immediate neighbours of Leonardslee to this meeting.

It was agreed that a few of the major strands of the plan would be examined by individual councillors. The screening of the new car parks, and dangerous road access had not been addressed by the scheme most recently submitted.

112/25 Chair's announcements

There were no further announcements from the Chair.

113/25 Approval of the External Audit Report.

114/25 Accounts status as at end of September.

115/25 Outstanding payments:

These issues were not discussed in view of the Clerk's absence from the meeting.

116/25 Date of the next meetings:

Planning – Tuesday 14th October 2025 at 7:00 pm to be held in the Church Rooms, Holy Trinity Church, Lower Beeding

117/25 Parish Council Meeting:

Tuesday 28th October 2025 at 7:00 pm to be held in the Church Rooms

The meeting concluded at 9:10 pm