LOWER BEEDING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the mee ng held on Tuesday 8th September 2026.
The Mee ng was held at Holy Trinity Church Rooms, Lower Beeding.

Present: Cllrs Bamford (Chair), Mercer, Dunckley, Keen, Allen, East, Smith
Also Present: The Clerk, Cllr Livingstone and one member of the public.

The Chair began the meeting at 7:00 pm

108/26 Apologies for absence: Cllrs Claridge & Raby.

109/26 Approval of minutes for:

- July 2026 Parish Council Meeting.

The minutes were approved by: Cllr Keen Seconded by: Cllr Bamford.

110/26 Meetings attended by Councillors.
Cllr Keen met Mr Streeter (Manager of Leonardslee Gardens) regarding the bus stop upgrade adjacent to the Gardens.

111/26 Declarations of Interests.
There were No Declarations of Interests.

112/26 Report from District Councillor.
Cllr Livingstone reported the following:
Planning Changes: Significant changes to the national planning system are being introduced in the very near future, and these will have a substantial impact on how planning applications are handled.

I. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
The updated NPPF has now been issued and is in immediate effect. It continues to rely on the standard method for calculating minimum local housing need. In practice, this approach drives higher housing numbers onto greenfield sites, often producing homes that are well beyond the reach of local buyers.
The standard method rests on two flawed assumptions:

- That the only way to reduce house prices is to release large volumes of planning permissions across the country.
- That so called "NIMBY" planning committees are the primary barrier to housing delivery.

Both assumptions are demonstrably incorrect, and both have a disproportionate impact on our district.

II. National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions
Following the NPPF update, the Government has issued new statutory guidance titled Planning Committees and the National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions. The intention appears to be to address what it perceives as resistance from local planning committees.
This guidance is statutory. Failure to comply could expose the Council to judicial review and the potential quashing of decisions.
Under the scheme, Horsham District Council (HDC) must amend its constitution by 31 October 2026 to align with the new national approach. This includes reducing the size of the Planning Committee to a maximum of 13 members.

The guidance contains two schedules:
Schedule 1 – Mandatory Delegation to Officers
Applications in Schedule 1 cannot be referred to committee. These include:

- Householder applications
- Minor commercial applications
- Minor residential applications (between one and nine dwellings)

Schedule 2 – Presumption of Delegation
All other applications fall under Schedule 2. For these, there is a presumption that decisions will be delegated to officers unless both the nominated officer and nominated member agree that the application should be referred to committee. The expectation is that:

- The Head of Development will act as the nominated officer
- The Chair of the Planning Committee will act as the nominated member

If they do not agree, the officer's view prevails.

HDC's Approach
The Council receives a substantial number of applications each year that fall within Schedule 2. To manage this, all Schedule 2 applications will undergo a triage process to ensure that only those raising genuinely significant issues are considered for referral to committee. Applications not referred will be determined under officer delegation.
Schedule 2 applications will be assessed using a three stage Gateway process:

Gateway 1 – Schedule Identification
Determines whether the application falls under Schedule 1 or Schedule 2.

Gateway 2 – Triage Criteria
An application passes Gateway 2 if any of the following apply:

- The proposal represents a departure from the development plan.
- A District Councillor requests referral to committee.
- The Town or Parish Council requests referral and wishes to address the committee.
- Eight or more representations are received that conflict with the officer recommendation.
- The Head of Development and Building Control considers that exceptional justification exists due to significant economic, social or environmental issues, or other material planning considerations.

Important note: Any request for referral must be made in writing, copied to planning@horsham.gov.uk, within the relevant consultation period. The request must explain why the application raises significant issues for the local area or significant planning matters.

Gateway 3 – Statutory Test
The nominated officer and nominated member will review all remaining applications. The presumption remains that decisions will be delegated unless the application raises one or more significant economic, social, environmental or material planning issues.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
There is very little information as to why the recent pause has come about. We will it seems now have a HDC election in May next year. There is no guidance on how long the term will be.
Millions of pounds have been wasted across West Sussex preparing for unitary authorities and we were told that we would definitely be informed of the final arrangement in October, this will now not occur.
All West Sussex councils have already spent significant sums preparing for:

- Governance modelling
- Service integration plans
- Financial harmonisation
- Staff restructuring frameworks
- Shadow authority preparations

HDC and WSCC await more information from Central Government on their next steps.

113/26 Report from County Councillor.
The County Councillor was not present at the meeting.

114/26 Public Adjournment
To include:

- Transport Working Party feedback.
  Jacqui Dunning informed the PC that the old Speed Indication Devices (SID's) had been decommissioned. The Council asked could they be sold.
- Church Lane (CL) & Warninglid Lane (WL) update – The Clerk informed the PC regarding issues that had arisen on both Lanes.
- Church Lane residents reported the worsening condition of the potholes and had contacted West Sussex Highways about resurfacing plans. George Fort (Highways Assistant Area Manager) reported Highways was handling a high volume of pothole reports and would try to priori se Church Lane.
- A resident of WL had reported HGV's frequently using WL offloading soil in a local farm and speeding back to the Handcross Rd.

115/26 Other matters arising which are not covered elsewhere on the agenda.
Updates:

- **Community Governance Review (CGR)** – The Chair outlined Nuthurst PC's request to transfer the twelve proper es in Monks Gate on the boundary between the two parishes to their Parish. LBPC wrote to each household to explain the proposal and separately submi ed an objec on to the CGR team.
- **Wheatsheaf Pub (WP) noise complaints** – The Clerk reported complaints from neighbours about excessive weekend noise. Cllr Livingstone and the Clerk met the landlord, explained the concerns, and asked him to monitor and reduce the noise. He agreed to keep it to a minimum.
- **Recrea on Ground Documents Approval** – Cllr Keen reported that no further correspondence had been received from HDC.
- **Playground refurbishment** – Cllr Claridge reported that the wet-pour playground surface s ll requires comple on. The work will cost approximately £4,000, and the PC approved the installation. The replacement bench and matting have arrived and can be installed by the LB maintenance team. Cllr Claridge requested a li er bin for the playground. The PC also discussed the wider need for li er and dog-waste bins across the parish. The Clerk explained the si ng criteria and will follow up with HDC.
- **No. 17 and 89 Bus Stops** – Cllr Keen met Adam Streeter, Manager of Leonardslee Gardens, to discuss upgrading the bus shelters outside the Gardens. Mr Streeter agreed to fund the upgrades, including real- me metable displays. They also discussed the No. 89 route, par cularly the stops near Cisswood House Hotel which are in a hazardous posi on.
- **PC and School flyer** – The Chair reported that no progress had been made.
- **Clerk's updated contract** – The PC will discuss this at a separate mee ng.
- **Environmental Grant (EG)** – The Clerk reported that the EG report to HDC had been deferred un l the end of September. Cllr Keen volunteered to prepare it for the EG team.
- **Civility and Respect Pledge** – The Clerk circulated a background report on the Pledge. The PC voted not to adopt it.
- **Martyn's Law** – The Clerk briefed the PC on the forthcoming law, which is awai ng final parliamentary approval.

116/26 Chair's announcements.
The Chair asked the Council for ideas on services that the PC can provide to residents.
Three initial ideas were:

- Defib Training
- First Aid Training
- Pet First Aid

The PC will provide the trainer/ training location and beverages.
The Clerk will post a notice in the Parish Magazine and on the LB website.

117/26 Approval; of External Audit Report
The audit report was approved by: Cllr Bamford and seconded by: Cllr Dunckley

118/26 Accounts August 2026.

Balances 31st July 2026

	Community Account - Balance	**£29,756.50**
	Business Account - Balance	**£20,666.09**
	32 Day Notice Account	**£53,322.53**
07-Aug	**MP Christian - Fence erection**	**£1,825.00**
07-Aug	**Moore - External Audit**	**£409.50**
07-Aug	**Parish Maintenance**	**£75.00**
07-Aug	**London Rd - Storage**	**£50.00**
07-Aug	**Beacon Fencing - Fence fixtures and fittings**	**£98.76**
07-Aug	**John Dunlop - Skip Hire for old fence removal**	**£280.00**
17-Aug	**MAS Networks**	**£104.39**
18-Aug	**Bank Charges**	**£4.25**
25-Aug	**Clerk Salary**	**£1,316.10**
25-Aug	**NO Butts Bin Co- Replacement bench for Payground**	**£540.00**
25-Aug	**Expenses**	**£306.34**
	Total Costs	**£5,009.34**
	Business Account	
10-Aug	**Interest**	**£9.06**
	32 Day Notice Account	
	Interest	**£75.72**

Balances at end of August 2026

Community Account - Balance	**£24,747.16**	**£20,675.15**	**£53,398.25**
Business Account - Balance	**Total**	**£98,820.56**	
32 Day Notice Account			

- **VAT Refund & Debit Card Application**

The Clerk informed the Council that the PC has received a VAT refund of £3,361.70. He also recommended the PC apply for a debit card to maximise future VAT payments.

119/26 Outstanding payments.
There were no outstanding payments.

Date of the next meetings:

120/26 Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 13th October 2026 at 7:00 pm to be held in the Church Rooms Holy Trinity Church, Lower Beeding.

121/26 Planning Meetings –Tuesday 29th September 2026 at 7:00 pm to be held in the Church Rooms Holy Trinity Church, Lower Beeding.

Please note that Planning Meetings will only take place if there are any applications to review.

The meeting concluded at 8:45 pm

Peter Knox

Clerk to Lower Beeding Parish Council

Email: clerk@lowerbeeding.com