

Swan View, Lower Street, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2BF Telephone: 01798 873532 Email: Reception@pulboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk www.pulboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk

for Pulborough's future

The Minutes of the Ordinary Full Council Meeting of Pulborough Parish Council held on Tuesday 4th March 2025 commencing 6:00 pm held at the United Reformed Church, 82 Lower Street, Pulborough, RH20 2DW.

13. Attendance and Apologies for Absence.

Those Present: Cllr Campbell (Chairman), Cllr Clarke, Cllr Esdaile, Cllr Marcuson, Cllr Hare, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Labuschagne, Cllr Martin and Cllr Riddle.
Also Present: WSCC Cllr Kenyon, HDC Cllr Ellis-Brown and P. Richards (Locum Clerk).
Six members of the public were present.
Apologies: Apologies were accepted from Cllr Court, Cllr Curd and Cllr Trembling.

- **14.** Appointment of the Proper Officer Cllr Clarke proposed that the Locum Clerk, Paul Richards, be appointed as the Proper Officer. This was seconded by Cllr Esdaile and AGREED unanimously.
- **15. Co-option –** The Chairman invited Mr Perry to present his application for co-option. Thereafter, the meeting was adjourned to allow Members the opportunity to review the application.

1804: meeting adjourned 1807: meeting resumed

Members then voted, unanimously, to co-opt Mr Perry as a Parish Councillor. He signed his Acceptance of Office paper and joined the meeting.

- 16. To receive any declarations of interests from members in respect to Items on the agenda none.
- 17. Minutes of the last Full Council meeting after the correction of a typographical error, Cllr Hunt proposed that the draft Minutes be accepted as a true record and that the Chairman sign them. This was seconded by Cllr Esdaile and AGREED unanimously.
- **18.** Committee Meeting Minutes Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes, Reports and Recommendations of Committees (other than separate agenda items) as below.
- **19.** Minutes of the last Planning & Services committees Cllr Hare requested that a mis-spelled road name be altered on the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2025. The draft Minutes were noted.
- 20. Minutes of the last Recreation and Open Spaces committee no meeting held.
- 21. Pulborough Shedders no one in attendance.

1804: meeting adjourned for the public session

22. Public Session – Mr Ellis-Brown presented proposals to establish a Charity (or Charitable Incorporated Organisation) to move the management and responsibility of the Pantry from Pulborough PC. The proposal suggested a lease at a nominal rent for exclusive use of the space.

1807: meeting resumed





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23. Warden Report – the January 2025 report, circulated previously, was noted. Cllr Riddle asked that the Wardens' details be relocated on the Nutbourne noticeboard due to the restricted space on it.

24. District and County Report.

- WSCC Cllr Kenyon referred to her report circulated previously and attached at Appendix A. The Clerk was asked to ensure her reports are posted up onto to the PPC website in future. In addition, she advised that:
 - The Devolution public consultation period had now opened;
 - The Scrutiny Committee had approved a Flood Management Project;
 - o The Highways Scrutiny Committee had approved an additional £5m to the highways budget; and
 - o Details of the West Chiltington riparian drainage scheme was presented

Cllr Hare asked that the West Chiltington Golf Club brown tourist sign be removed as the club had been closed for 8 years. Cllr Clarke queried the Church Hill update and referred to the unstable bank. WSCC Cllr Kenyon agreed to review this. Members then reviewed various aspects relating to the traffic issues at that location and WSCC Cllr Kenyon explained the legal concerns that had slowed down the resolution of the problems.

- Cllr Clarke provided a HDC update and also referred to the plans for devolution.
 - He updated Members on the lack of progress with the draft new Local Plan given the Government Inspector had suspended the Public Hearings. All questions raised by the Inspector had now been answered by HDC officers. Concern has been raised about the risk of a planning policy vacuum should the new Plan not be adopted;
 - \circ $\;$ The Council Office move had been completed, and a new Jobs Hub created; and
 - Expressions of Interest for the third round of the Housing Fund had been announced by Government. HDC plan to use the funds to provide temporary and resettlement housing if successful.
- HDC Cllr Ellis-Brown also advised that:
 - The 2025/26 HDC budget had been approved with a 2.99% increase in Council Tax;
 - A Devolution meeting with the HDC Leader and CEO will take place in Pulborough on 17th March 2025;
 - A River Recovery project had been agreed with local agencies;
 - o The HDC Constitution is under review; and
 - Until the new Local Plan is agreed, the existing Plan's policies are still valid.

Members **NOTED** the District & County Reports.

- 25. Pulborough Transport Options Cllr Clarke referred to the draft proposals circulated previously. He advised that the draft proposals followed collaboration between PPC, WSCC and HDC and contained a list of actions and recommendations. Members discussed the various proposals, and it was AGREED to (a) recirculate the paper to all Members and (b) hold a separate meeting to review the proposal details.
- 26. Payments Members ACCEPTED all payments as presented at the meeting.





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- 27. Pantry The Chairman asked the Clerk to present his paper, circulated previously. The transfer of responsibility of the Pantry to a Charity or third party was considered and options reviewed. Members noted that the space in the pavilion is also used by other organisations for meetings and exclusive use of the pantry space could be an issue. Cllr Hunt proposed that PPC invite expressions of interest and that the Council review any such proposals. This was seconded by Cllr Labuschagne and AGREED unanimously.
- 28. Community Café the Chairman referred to a meeting he and Cllr Clarke had with the Sports and Social Club. They referred to a private agreement reached with the Club and the Community Café. Cllr Clarke advised that this agreement did not breach the terms of the Club's lease with PPC. Members noted the clarification.
- 29. Adjournment confidential session.

1903: meeting adjourned – private session. The press and public were excluded. 1906: meeting resumed

- **30. Personnel** the advert, job description and person specification for the new Clerk were reviewed and **AGREED**, unanimously. Members also **AGREED** to delegate the appointment of the new Clerk to the Staffing Committee.
- 31. Payments the payments schedule, circulated at the meeting, were AGREED unanimously,

The meeting closed at 19:12

Signed

Dated





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APPENDIX A – WSCC REPORT

WSCC

- On 16th December 2024, HMG published the English Devolution White Paper, setting out its approach to devolution, local government reorganisation and the abolition of two tier government <u>Devolution and Local</u> <u>Government Reorganisation (LGR)</u>.
 - It was confirmed on 5th February that, following an expression of interest from the leaders of West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, and East Sussex County Council, ministers have approved proposals to create a mayoral strategic authority for Sussex, made up of an elected mayor and two members of each constituent authority, with strategic powers for transport, public safety, health, environment and climate change, housing, economic growth, skills and jobs.
 - The government will now begin a consultation to seek the views of people and organisations in Sussex.
 County Council elections scheduled for May 2025 will be deferred. Serving Councillors will 'roll over' pending the outcome of the consultation.
 - Alongside devolution, the government is asking for proposals for unitary councils in all parts of Sussex, moving away from the two-tier model of county and borough or district councils where those exist. Discussion with partners will continue on how this might be arranged.
 - There are no immediate changes to the operation of local authorities in Sussex or the services they provide.
 - See Future of local government in Sussex West Sussex County Council.
- On December 13th 2024 I attended **Full Council**.
 - I proposed the Notice of Motion on Family Farms, in support of WS farmers, urging HMG to reconsider its proposed changes to agricultural property relief and business property relief from April 2026 <u>Notice</u> of motion on family farms - briefing note.
 - Papers and link to the web cast may be found here <u>Agenda for County Council on Friday, 13 December</u> <u>2024, 10.30 am</u>.
- I attended the members' session on 17th January to review details of the **2025/26 Council Plan and Budget**, Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30 and Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2029/30.
 - Net Expenditure between 2024/25 and 2025/26 has increased by £58.7m, £22.9m of which is attributable to pay and price inflation. Changes to National Living Wage and NI alone have added £11.7m and £5.3m to the cost base.
 - WSCC is experiencing continued demand pressures, particularly in adults' social care, children's services and home to school transport. These pressures are not unique to WS but affect Councils across the country.
 - The budget will be confirmed at Full Council in February 2025.
 - The Council's four priorities remain the same:
 - Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations
 - A sustainable and prosperous economy
 - Helping people help themselves
 - Making best use of resources
 - The Council Plan was to have been reviewed following County Council election in May 2025 and was to have run to 2029. This is now subject to plans for devolution.





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- I have participated in further meetings of the Executive Task and Finish Group under the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change to review WSCC's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The updated strategy is due to be available for consultation in February 2025. Flood Risk Management
- In addition, I attended the following WSCC meetings and committees:
 - RAAC on 22nd November
 - o CHESC on 25th November
- I shall attend the following meetings:
 - o RAAC on 7th January
 - Full Council (budget meeting) on 14th February
 - CHESC 3rd March
 - Full Council 21st March
- The 'West Sussex Transport Plan 2022-36 2024 Annual Monitoring Report' has been published <u>Annual</u> <u>Monitoring Report</u>.
 - A draft was reviewed at CHESC, on which I sit, on 25th November 2024. I raised the ongoing issue of the perception of risk, particularly by vulnerable road users (VRUs) who increasingly avoid certain rural roads due to increased volumes of traffic and 'rat running'.
- WSCC has recently published its 2023/24 report to residents of adult social care performance in West Sussex 2023/24 Local Account. The report details WSCC's work during the year, its successes, priorities and areas for improvement. It explains how the budget was spent, outlines current activities and programmes of work, together with plans for the future. The Local Account is <u>published online only</u>. Individual pages, sections and the whole document can easily be printed if required and a pdf version can be downloaded. Hard copies will be provided on request by the Adults' Services Systems and Information Team.
- The WSCC Forward Plan of key decisions can be found here: <u>Browse Plan Forward Plan, 2024</u> (moderngov.co.uk).
 - Key decisions are those which involve spending or savings of £500,000 or more, or which will have a significant effect on communities in two or more electoral divisions. They are taken by the County Council, Cabinet, Cabinet Members and officers.
 - Published decisions can be accessed on WSCC's Decisions page <u>, 30 April 2024 14 May 2024</u> (moderngov.co.uk).
 - Sign up at West Sussex County Council (govdelivery.com) to receive the Forward Plan email.
- Information on the WSCC budget for 2024/25 can be found here: <u>Budget 2024/25 West Sussex County Council</u>
- The calendar of WSCC meetings for 2024/25 can be found here: <u>Calendar for 2024/25 (moderngov.co.uk)</u>
- You can Sign up to receive full Council email alerts (opens in new window)

Division wide

- Following the decision of the Government's Planning Inspector to cancel Horsham District Council's Local Plan examination hearings, the Council has submitted further information and is now ready to proceed with the remaining examination sessions <u>Council ready to proceed to next stage of Local Plan examination | Horsham District Council</u>.
 - The Council's response to the Inspector also notes that the Government has recently published proposals for devolution which would result in the reorganisation of Local Government. Therefore, any requirement to prepare a new Local Plan will probably be impacted by these proposals.
 - The Council has yet to hear back from the Inspector regarding when we expect to hear more detail from him.





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- The status of the A29 at Church Hill remains unchanged: WSCC continues to pursue legal redress to gain access to the embankments. As soon as I have news, I will share it.
- PCs are encouraged to pursue TROs, including speed reductions, for traffic calming, building on successful TROs and CHSs (Storrington A283, West Chiltington B2133, Thakeham B2139).

Case work & local engagement

Coldwaltham

- Ongoing:
 - It appears that the clearing the footpath from the railway bridge at Hardham up to The Piggeries has been done. On a site visit with the Head of Local Highway Operations on 26th Sept. I asked for estimates for clearance of the entire footway. I haven't seen an update and will enquire about this.

Pulborough

- New
 - I received a report of blocked drains on Gay Street Lane from Mr Peter Jenkin who contacted WSCC highways on the 30th September 2024 (ref. 3819918). I have since received a report from WSCC Highways confirming these were cleared in November 2024.
 - "Gay Street lane. Enquiry Number 3825359. The drainage on Gay Street Lane has had its scheduled cleanse in November 2024 and they are on a quadrennial cleanse schedule. I personally inspected this road and found some issues with the drainage system. I have had jobs committed on a P2 priority. The P2 job 70211093 will not be completed for a while due to this being a P2 road closure we have to give 3 month notice and as we are getting new contractors in April these won't be done till after that, unless there is enough evidence to raise it to a P1 job."
 - I have informed Mr Jenkin.
 - A sink hole has opened up again on the inside bend of the westbound carriageway of West Chiltington Road, at the junction of and Nutbourne Road, near Dyke Farm, Pulborough. This is a recurring problem which I suspect will only be solved in the long term by the introduction of extra drainage. In the meantime, I have requested that this defect is repaired.
- Ongoing:
 - Blackgate Lane, Pulborough. Mrs Carol Houston, a resident, has requested that 'slow' markings on the A29 at Blackgate Lane, which have faded, are reinstated. Job number 3817271. No date for completion. I have advised Mrs Houston and will keep this on my 'watch list'.
 - Faster Broadband Shackleton Close, Coldwaltham. Mr Chris Bradford contacted me some time ago on behalf of his son about slow broadband speeds. In June 2024, I was informed that the Better Connected project had ceased and that "The most likely option/route to support these premises is via Project Gigabit. We are still awaiting confirmation of the proposed Intervention Area for which BDUK and CityFibre are still finalising. We expect to know more following the conclusion of the design for the first drawdown, expected at the end of July." I have asked for an update.

Thakeham

- New:
 - I am aware of an application relating to the diversion of FP 2475 in Thakeham, on the western side of Crays Lane. I understand that the proposal is acceptable to the Parish Council.





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West Chiltington

- New
 - The bends on the Hollows, which I reported as being repaired in August 2024, have deteriorated badly to the point where they are again dangerous. The surface of the road is breaking up and 'pillowing', creating a very uneven and insecure surface. Cars are once again deviating across the centre line on blind bends to avoid this hazard and it is particularly dangerous to cyclists. I've requested urgent action to address this and have received the following update from WSCC Highways:
 - The Hollows, West Chiltington. Enquiry number 3825357. Passed on to our Senior Highway Steward to inspect for patching. The inspection should be carried out in the next few weeks and patching works put in the system."
 - Cllr S Booth raised an enquiry regarding a culvert that runs under West Chiltington Road (WCR), slightly north of the main culvert that was recently repaired, which appeared not to be flowing. I have received a report on this from WSCC Riparian Drainage Project Officers (circulated separately). In summary:
 - Three are six culverts that run underneath WCR in the vicinity of Heath Mill/Panners Drive:
 - Three 'south' culverts (one old, two new) near Panners drive which were the site of works last year to repair the road and improve drainage
 - Three 'north' culverts that previously served as the outflows from the now redundant Heath Mill.
 - The RDPO team undertook a visit to Heath Mill on 22nd November 2024. A site walkover discovered that the mill pond no longer exists and has been historically filled. In addition, the ditches that filled the pond either no longer exist or no longer have the means of communicating with the main watercourse that flows along the east boundary of Heath Mill land. Observations on site would suggest the Mill has been redundant for several decades.
 - There is no current connection between the main watercourse and the redundant mill water courses, although it is believed that there was once a connection between the main watercourse and the mill ditches via a sluice (not located on a recent site visit and assumed removed at some time in the past).
 - With the mill no longer functioning, and with no sluice structure to divert flow, the three south culverts under West Chiltington Road manage all run-off from the catchment.
 - The report includes consideration of the work that may be required in order to bring the original ditches that served the mill back into operation, plus other suggestions which the PC may wish to consider.
 - I have indicated my support for the proposal from WC PC to restrict speed on Broadford Bridge Road to a maximum of 40mph.
 - WCR will be closed for one day on 22nd Feb. presumably for culvert jetting.
- Ongoing
 - On 21st November I reported that a step to the stile at the junction of footpath 2439 and 2437 in West Chiltington is broken, making it difficult to negotiate for the less flexible. This has been passed to the WSCC PROW team.

Link to the MPs website: News | Andrew Griffith





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Glossary

BPG	Business Planning Group
CHESC	Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee
CHS	Community highways scheme e.g. traffic calming features, town/village centre enhancements, cycling facilities and small scale junction improvements
CYPLS	Children, Young People, Learning and Skills
LFRMS	Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
PC	Parish Council/Parish Councillor
PROW	Public Right of Way
PTIWG	Pulborough Transport and Infrastructure Working Group
RAAC	Regulation Audit and Accounts Committee
TFG	Task and Finish Group – a working party to consider a specific issue
TRO	Traffic regulation order. Measures to restrict or prohibit the use of the
	highway network, in line with The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 e.g.
	speed limits, line painting
WC	West Chiltington





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APPENDIX B Item 14 - Proper Officer Report

Agenda Item14/24

Report to:	Full Council
Report from:	Chair
Report on:	Appointment of the Proper Officer

1. Background.

Following the resignation of the Parish Clerk, a Locum Clerk, Paul Richards, has been appointed to ensure the Parish Council maintain a 'business as usual' service, remain fully compliant and enables the outgoing Parish Clerk to focus on providing a detailed handover of current projects and initiatives to the Parish Chair and Council Members during his notice period.

2. Proper Officer.

The Parish Clerk is the "Proper Officer" of the Parish Council. The Proper Officer is a formal role as defined in the Local Government Act 1972¹ and is a title used in statute. It refers to the appropriate officer for the relevant function. In Town and Parish Councils, the Proper Officer is normally the Clerk. In financial matters, the proper officer is known as the Responsible Financial Officer.

3. Formal appointment.

Whereas the Locum Parish Clerk has been appointed by PPC's Personnel Sub Committee, the role of Proper Officer must be confirmed by Full Council.

4. Recommendation.

It is recommended that the Locum Parish Clerk, Paul Richards, be appointed as the Proper Officer to Pulborough Parish Council until the new Parish Clerk is appointed and in place.

Cllr Sharon Curd Chair

¹ Section 112 of the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, section 101 of the 1972 and section 151 of the LGA 1972





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APPENDIX C Item 27 – Pantry

Agenda Item 27/24

Report to:	Full Council
Report from:	Clerk
Report on:	Community Pantry

5. Background.

The Community Pantry located on the Pulborough Recreation Ground was launched on 9th January 2024 and the Parish Council agreed that space at the back of the village sports and social club could be utilised for its operation. The financial arrangements separate the funding and income from the main Parish Council budget therefore having no impact on the precept.

6. Proposal to form a Charity.

A proposal has been received to establish a Charity (or Charitable Incorporated Organisation) and to move the management and responsibility of the Pantry from Pulborough PC. The proposal suggests a three-year lease at a nominal rent for exclusive use of the space.

7. Issues to consider.

The transfer of responsibility to a Charity or third party could raise several concerns or queries for the Parish Council to consider. These include:

- **Meeting rooms** the Parish Council use the existing space for committee meetings. By granting exclusive use of the space to the Pantry, the Parish Council would be denied access to the meeting room and would incur additional room hire costs;
- **Building Condition** the building is in poor condition, and it would be unlikely if a new tenant would accept a full repairing lease;
- **Fund raising** Pultopia and the Christmas Fete are Parish Council fund raising activities for the benefit of the Pantry. This might need to be reviewed if the pantry's status changes;
- **Development** the Parish Council has progressed outline plans to rebuild/relocate the current building to create a Community Hub. As the existing building may be redeveloped, a three-year lease may not be able to be granted. However, an agreement could be reached to offer a lease until the end of life of the existing building; and
- **Options** The Parish Council should invite other options/proposals and not just consider one proposal.

8. Recommendation.

That the parish council consider the proposal and review the options and issues that may arise.

Paul Richards Locum Clerk





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APPENDIX D Item 31 – Payments

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NO	Date	Chq No/ Transfer	Payee	Description	Amount £'s	Signature 1	Signature 2	RFO
246	04/03/2025	TR246	Lakers Builders Merchants	Safety Spectacles for Groundsman	£9.07			
247	04/03/2025	TR247	Lakers Bui;ders Merchants	Box Screws MUGA Gate Box	£3.19			
248	04/03/2025	TR248	LASER	S&SC Gas 31/12/2025 - 31/01/2025	£60.87			
249	04/03/2025	TR249	Lakers Builders Merchants	Bark for Footpaths in Pocket Park 2 x Bulk Bags	£180.00			
250	04/03/2025	TR250	Pulborough URC	Full council 4th march 2025 plus an additional 15 minutes	£33.00	PAID		
251	04/03/2025	TR251	Gallagher Insurance	Truck Insurance 08/12/2024 - 07/12/2025	£1,217.73			
252	04/03/2025	TR252	LASER	Rectory Close Electricity - 01/11/2024 - 31/01/2025	£385.57			
253	04/03/2025	TR253	CBRE	Membership Fee 28/02/2025 - 01/03/2026	£60.00			
254	04/03/2025	TR254	FAROL	Bolts & Nuts for John Deere Mower	£49.57			
255	04/03/2025	TR255	Paul Richards	Locum Clerk Services & Land Registry	£2,759.00			
256	04/03/2025	TR256	wscc	Salaries February 2025	£10,353.42			
257	04/03/2025	TR257	Burgess & Randall	Petrol Mower for Groundsman	£749.00			
258	04/03/2025	TR258	Heather Richardson Consultancy	Various Letter Templates	£135.00			
259	04/03/2025	TR259	Heather Richardson Consultancy	3 Month Advisory service Apr - Jun 2025	£360.00			
260	04/03/2025	TR260	Jack Killner	Expenses - fuel for ride on mower	£25.28			
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