



**STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON  
PARISH COUNCIL**

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## **Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council**

**that will take place in the Main Hall, at the Parish Hall, Thakeham Road, Storrington**

**at 7.30pm on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Present:** Cllr Mark Cramer (Chair), Cllr John Loney (Vice-Chair), Cllr Bill Aitkenhead, Cllr Andy Castle, Cllr Peter Meadows, Cllr Virginia Hicks, Cllr Brian Sadler, Cllr Theresa Bennett, Cllr Claudia Fisher, Cllr Burnell, Cllr Moremon, Cllr Tony Mills and Cllr Jackson.

**In Attendance:** Cllr Joan Grech (HDC) and Cllr Emma Beard (HDC).

**Members of the Public:** Five.

**Minutes:** Rebecca Luckin (Clerk).

### **MINUTES**

**The Chair welcomed Cllr Jackson, as a new member of the Parish Council, and welcomed Cllr Sharon Curd (Chair of Pulborough Parish Council) as a member of the public.**

#### **FC/25/196. Apologies for absence**

a) Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Hurley.

#### **FC/25/197. Declarations of interest**

a) Cllr Fisher declared an interest as a District Councillor.

#### **FC/25/198. Public Participation**

Cllr Cramer outlined the process for public participation.

a) A member of the public asked what's going on with the Owl system previously purchased? The Chair advised that the Parish Council were working on effective microphones and streaming options, mindful of limited resources. The Parish Council is aspiring to provide recordings and recognised the importance.

b) The same member of the public asked regarding access to the budget documentation in order that we can understand exactly what line items are being put through the budget? Cllr Cramer confirmed that all Committee meetings are minuted, and that the Parish Council has a responsibility to produce information for public consumption. If a member of the public has a particular area of interest, the information can be provided. There is nothing to hide.

c) The same member of the public reported that Steyning Parish Council have posted budget information on social media. Cllr Cramer confirmed that now there is a full complement of Councillors, the Parish Council will be able to work hard on communications.

**FC/25/199. To consider and agree regarding transfer from CIL to General Reserves in the current budget**

a) Cllr Aitkenhead outlined the proposed use of CIL funds. The majority of CIL would go towards improvements at the Football Pavilion, currently leased to the Football Club, who use it approximately 20% of the time. The adjacent Leisure Centre has an urgent need for more space. He proposed a spend in the region of £45,000 (including a contingency of £4,000) in order to improve the interior, particularly flooring, which would facilitate 100% usage going forward. Historically, there has been no dilapidations fund.

Cllr Jackson asked if it would be possible to take the Leisure Centre back under Parish Council control, since he was of the opinion that the building was not being used to its potential. Councillors advised that a lease is currently in place until 2040 (agreed by a previous Council). The Leisure Centre is managed by a charitable trust, is currently very successful and is extremely well run by an excellent Manager. He could be invited to provide a presentation at the forthcoming Annual Parish Meeting, possibly to be held at the Leisure Centre.

Following recommendation from the Finance & Governance Committee, Cllr Aitkenhead **proposed** that Full Council approve the transfer of CIL Reserves to the General Reserve (if/when funds are spent in this financial year) up to the value of £59,000. **Seconded** by Cllr Mills. **Unanimously agreed.**

**FC/25/200. Full Council to consider and agree regarding the budget for 26/27**

a) Cllr Cramer outlined the process of drafting the 26/27 budget.

Following a period of lack of investment in Parish Council assets, the current Council had been working hard to address maintenance and compliance issues, however there was significant work still to be undertaken on an estate worth approximately £10m, in addition to Parish Council events, routine operational costs, tree-management, and the unexpected cost of recent by-elections – which are all part of the democratic process, but will cost in the region of £30k together. The role of the Parish Council is to manage the costs and make provision.

Following a period where a locum Clerk had managed the administration, there is now a new, qualified and experienced team in place. Local Government Re-organisation (devolution) is on the way, nobody really knows what that means at the moment however, it will land on the shoulders of the Parish Clerk and the Parish Office; workloads are phenomenal.

The only thing the Parish Council can do is to prepare by being pro-active and maintaining a strong position to get the best for the community. Cllr Cramer advised that the Parish Council wished to keep the precept as low as possible, however the proposed budget allows for a 19% increase on the precept, which represents a 4.9p a day increase for a Band D household. This is an investment back into the community where people work and live. The Parish Council cannot afford to stint on our community.

Cllr Meadows reported that the budget for 25/26 had been set at a level that, as it transpired, was grossly insufficient to meet the financial needs, and that Councillors had drawn upon reserves throughout the year. While final figures for this financial year are not yet known, it is likely that demand upon reserves will be in the region of £100k. The precept figure going forward is derived by making up the shortfall. The realistic budget includes a 19% increase, as the Parish Council make steps towards catching up with neighbouring parishes. Cllr Meadows advised that he was making no apologies, and felt absolutely justified in commending the draft budget to the Council. He advised that he was delighted to serve his community, recommending the budget as a small token of his love for the village.

Cllr Sadler advised that he intended to challenge the proposal, wishing to ensure that taxes were not increased any more than needed, and asked Full Council to consider a 5% increase. Other Councillors expressed concern that the challenge had not been raised during the preceding F&G Committee meeting,

that they were unclear how the alternative percentage increase had been calculated, and that the premise of what had been discussed was being changed at the very last minute. Councillors continued to express differences of opinion regarding Cllr Sadler's alternative figures. Following recommendation from the Finance & Governance Committee, Cllr Meadows **proposed** that Full Council agree the draft budget for 26/27. **Seconded** by Cllr Mills.

Recorded vote:

For – Cllrs Cramer, Loney, Aitkenhead, Castle, Meadows, Hicks, Bennett, Fisher, Burnell, Moremon and Mills.

Against – Cllrs Sadler and Jackson.

Abstained – None.

Outcome – **Agreed.**

**FC/25/201. Full Council to consider and agree regarding precept request to Horsham District Council**

a) Following recommendation from the Finance & Governance Committee, Cllr Meadows **proposed** that Full Council agree the value of the precept to be requested from HDC - **£376,635. Seconded** by Cllr Aitkenhead.

Recorded vote:

For – Cllrs Cramer, Loney, Aitkenhead, Castle, Meadows, Hicks, Bennett, Fisher, Burnell, Moremon and Mills.

Against – Cllrs Sadler and Jackson.

Abstained – None.

Outcome – **Agreed**

**FC/25/202. Chair's Announcements and items for the next agenda**

a) Agreement regarding Minutes of 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 and Matters Arising.

The Chair thanked those who had put in the work and had attended as members of the public.

**Date of next meeting – 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**The meeting closed at 8.49pm.**

Signed:   
Chair

**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**FULL COUNCIL ACTION LIST – 28.01.26:**

Ref	ACTION	Whom	✓
FC/25/199	Transfer reserves – as they are spent	Clerk	
FC/25/199	Contact LC Manager – not available that week for presentation.		✓
FC/25/200	Consolidate budget and publish	Clerk	
FC/25/201	Request precept asap	Clerk	✓

