

## STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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### **Full Parish Council Meeting** of Storrington and Sullington Parish Council in the Main Hall, Sullington Parish Hall, Thakeham Road, Storrington, RH20 3PP **6:30 pm Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

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

**In Attendance:** Cllr Paul Marshall (WSCC), Cllr Emma Beard (HDC) and Cllr Joan Grech (HDC).

**Members of the Public:** Four

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

## **MINUTES**

### **FC/25/227. Apologies for absence**

a) Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Peter Meadows, Cllr Richard Hurley and Cllr Jeremy Jackson.

### **FC/25/228. Declarations of interest**

a) Cllr Fisher declared an interest as HDC Councillor.

### **FC/25/229. Minutes of the previous meetings**

a) Cllr Mills **proposed** that the Minutes of the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026 be approved as a correct record of the meeting. **Seconded** by Cllr Fisher. **Agreed.** The Minutes were duly signed.

### **FC/25/230. Matters arising**

a) FC/25/222 – Councillor Code of Conduct and GDPR training – agenda item below.

### **FC/25/231. Public Participation**

a) A member of the public spoke regarding the Parish Council Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), asked if there would be transparency in the process, and expressed concern regarding lack of transparency at HDC, with particular regard to development north of Melton Drive. What would the Parish Council do to ensure that the process is transparent?

Cllr Loney confirmed that a statement would be drafted, advising how the Parish Council would approach the process, with regard to transparency.

Cllr Fisher noted that the HDC Local Plan had stalled again and the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) would reduce the power of NDPs.

b) A member of the public asked how the NDP Steering Group would be building on the previous NDP – sites that were

originally identified have not been developed and others that were not identified have been developed.

Cllr Aitkenhead advised that the process is currently in limbo and that identifying any new sites would be challenging. There were some pockets of land adjoining the Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB), however, it would need the landowner/s to put them forward. At a recent HDC meeting, it was reported that funds had been set aside for helping Parish Councils to finalise their NDPs.

Councillors noted that housing developer, Waites, had been liaising with the owner of land north of Melton Drive. The member of the public expressed disappointment with HDC responses, and asked how the Parish Council would draw upon previous work, and how could sites that were previously identified be developed?

Cllr Aitkenhead confirmed that all information would be on the new website.

### **FC/25/232. County Council Matters**

a) Cllr Marshall reported that the WSCC budget had been set, with no cuts to services and without the need to draw upon reserves, at a time when some other local areas are applying for emergency loans from central government. Highways is an emotive issue, with most of maintenance costs being covered by government grants, however WSCC has added £159m from Council Tax towards the maintenance of highways. WSCC is currently in a better position than others. Following a government Fairer Funding Review, £30m will be deducted from WSCC over the next three years and directed to other more deprived areas.

b) Regarding Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), WSCC had submitted two options and is expecting a response in March. Due diligence had been undertaken by WSCC regarding financial resilience. The Mayoral strategic authority has significant devolved powers already and is in the process of implementing the required infrastructure.

c) A Local Governance Review will be undertaken by HDC in due course, although advance discussions regarding the merging of parishes have been very unpopular. Cllr Marshall advised that it is for the new unitary authorities to decide how parishes should be organised, not district councils.

d) Cllr Sadler expressed concern that recent repairs to potholes in the High St had not lasted and asked if WSCC Highways could do better.

Cllr Marshall noted that similar points had been raised by Cllr Loney, and that the Highways Team respond to the tasks that are on their schedule. 'Find & Fix Gangs' may be re-introduced and will visit an area rather than waiting for problems to be listed on a schedule. The previous contract was to fix 35,000 potholes, going forward, the new contract makes provision for 47,000. Cllr Loney expressed concern that the quality of repair was not sufficient.

Councillors thanked Cllr Marshall.

### **FC/25/233. District Council Matters**

a) Cllr Beard reported that household food waste bins have been distributed throughout the district; collection will commence mid-April. With regard to the Parish Council bid for CIL funding, Cllr Fisher had undertaken further significant work in support of the application, highlighting that little funding had been available historically and that wellbeing and leisure had been neglected.

b) Following on from a recent Committee Meeting, Cllr Fisher reported regarding parking on pavements and new legislation being introduced.

c) Mindful that development on land north of Melton Drive had been approved by HDC, Cllr Fisher advised that she will ensure that it is the best development for the site. Cllr Fisher noted that the site had been transferred to Matthew Homes and had spoken to the Head of Design and Development who had offered a leaflet drop and an open meeting.

**Cllr Marshall, Cllr Beard and Cllr Grech left the meeting at 7.08pm**

### **FC/25/234. Wardens' Report to Full Council**

a) Councillors noted the most recent Wardens' Report.

### **FC/25/235. Referrals and recommendations from Committees, including expenditure:**

a) The ICE Committee made recommendation that Full Council should approve the final version of the new website prior

to launch. Cllr Hicks noted that fine-tuning would continue and **proposed** that the new website be approved.

**Seconded** by Cllr Aitkenhead. **Unanimously agreed.**

The Councillors and Clerk wished to record their thank to Cllr Hicks, who had worked extremely hard to drive the project forward, in addition to the many hours of support that she provides to the office, drawing upon her expertise in communications.

b) R&P – In the interests of safeguarding, the Committee made recommendation that replacement blinds should be fitted throughout the Parish Hall, according the specification drafted.

Quote 1 - £2,335.29+vat.

Quote 2 -£2,155.00+vat.

Mindful that a further quote would be required, Cllr Loney **proposed** a maximum expenditure value of £2,155+vat.

**Seconded** by Cllr Mills. **Agreed.**

c) T&T – Regarding the purchase of an ANPR camera, Cllr Loney reported that WSCC was not in a position to put ANPR into practice. The Finance Committee will be asked to hold the funds over for the next year.

#### **FC/25/236. Climate Action**

a) Nature Recovery Working Group Terms of Reference – Cllr Fisher reported that she had previously been asked to identify a baseline within the ToRs, however, had taken advice, since this would be a significant piece of work. Instead, Cllr Fisher had made other changes to the document and **proposed** that the Nature Recovery Working Group Terms of Reference be adopted. **Seconded** by Cllr Mills. **Agreed** (one abstention).

#### **FC/25/237. Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group update**

a) Discussed earlier in the meeting. Cllr Aitkenhead advised that when the NDP process is restarted, he would like to invite outside personnel to the Steering Group and extended the invitation to Mr Andrew Garrood and Mr Phil Jones.

#### **A member of the public left the meeting.**

#### **FC/25/238. Devolution preparation**

a) Councillors noted that a Working Group leader would need to be identified - Cllr Sadler to consider.

#### **FC/25/239. Youth provision**

a) R&P Committee members noted that a member of the public had requested an outdoor table tennis at the Sullington Recreation ground, at a recent meeting. Other initiatives include working with the Neighbourhood Wardens. Budget will need to be carried forward. Cllr Hicks had met with Dan Fairchild (HDC Youth Provision Officer) regarding a youth van which can visit popular areas in the parish during the summer months, targeting 11 – 14 year olds. The Rotary Club will be asked if they would like to support financially.

#### **FC/25/240. Committee Membership**

a) Cllr Loney **proposed** that the Chair/Vice-Chair of ICE join the F&G Committee (as per Terms of Reference).

**Seconded** by Cllr Moremon.

Recorded vote:

**Unanimously agreed.**

#### **FC/25/241. Safeguarding Policy – Councillors to consider draft V2 policy and agree – April agenda.**

#### **FC/25/242. Social Media Policy – Councillors to consider and agree**

a) Discussion was undertaken regarding the use of social media. Councillors using social media should make clear when they are expressing personal views and should not present those views as the position of the Parish Council. They should also avoid expressing fixed views on matters that are yet to be considered by the Parish Council, to avoid any perception of pre-determination or bias which may undermine the decision-making process. Councillors will be asked to remove posts if that ever occurs.

Subject to the addition of a signature strip at the bottom of the document, Cllr Hicks **proposed** that the Social Media Policy be adopted. **Seconded** by Cllr Castle.

Recorded vote

**Unanimously agreed.**

**FC/25/243. Councillors training regarding GDPR and Code of Conduct**

a) Following recommendation from the Parish Council Data Protection Officer that all Councillors should undertake training, a quote for Code of Conduct training has been approved, with GDPR training to be organised, however, in order for training to be most effective, all Councillors will need to be available. Training can be arranged urgently, provided that a recording of training can be available to absentees.

**FC/25/244. Annual Parish Meeting**

a) Councillors agreed that the venue should be Sullington Parish Hall.

b) Councillors noted that Cllr Martin Boffey (Leader of HDC) would be available to speak regarding Devolution and that Laura Vaughn-Hirsch (Knepp Foundation) would be available to speak regarding the Parish Council's partnership with the White Stork Project and European Stork Villages Network, and nature recovery in general. Councillors asked the Clerk to also contact Sarah Abercrombie, Chair of Sussex Wildlife, to enquire whether she could be available to provide a brief talk. Cllr Loney **proposed** the speakers be approved. **Seconded** by Cllr Aitkenhead. **Agreed.**

**FC/25/245. Chair's announcements and items for the next agenda:**

a) WSCC elections have been reinstated for 7<sup>th</sup> May 2026. WSCC candidate event details circulated.

b) HDC forthcoming Community Governance Review. Clerks and Councillors in the district have already raised concerns that Parish Councils should be given the opportunity to provide more in-depth feedback, since they will be the most impacted by any changes.

c) The Great British Spring Clean – 17<sup>th</sup> March – 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026. The Clerk will contact our regular volunteers who litter-pick throughout the year. Wardens have also arranged specific litter-picking events.

d) Item for the next agenda - Public Participation Protocol – Enhanced Governance Safeguards.

e) Item for the next Agenda - Strategic Plan for 26/27.

f) Items for communication – the upcoming Annual Parish Meeting. Advance questions will be invited.

**FC/25/246. Date of next meetings:**

**a) Full Council Meeting at 6.30pm 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026**

**b) Annual Parish Meeting at 6.30pm 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2026**

**CONFIDENTIAL SESSION** - the Chair **proposed**, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and in accordance with Standing Orders 3 (d), to exclude the press and public on the grounds that the confidential matters to be discussed under item **247** below would be prejudicial in the public interest. **Seconded** by Cllr Loney. **Agreed.**

**Members of the public left the meeting**

**Cllrs Burnell and Moremon left at 8.06pm**

**FC/25/247. Employment matters**

a) Mindful of the agreed salary budget for 26/27, Cllr Loney **proposed** that the Premises and Maintenance Officer be awarded their salary increase from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026. **Seconded** by Cllr Fisher. **Unanimously agreed.**

b) Mindful of need to implement efficiencies going forward, the Parish Office will be non-contact to visitors between the hours of midday – 4pm, unless a meeting has been agreed.

**The Chair closed the meeting at 8.08pm.**

Signed:  
Chair

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026

**ACTION LIST – FULL COUNCIL – 04.03.26:**

<b>Ref:</b>	<b>ACTION:</b>	<b>Whom</b>	<b>√</b>
<b>231</b>	Draft statement re NDP process	Cllr Loney	
<b>225b</b>	Obtain further quote for blinds. Order blinds	Cllr Loney / Clerk	
<b>225c</b>	F&C Agenda – hold ANPR funds over to 26/27.	Clerk	
<b>239a</b>	F&G – agenda item – ask for 25/26 Youth budget to be carried forward.	Clerk	
<b>242</b>	Social Media Policy – add signature, circulate and post to website.	Clerk	
<b>243</b>	Organise Councillors training regarding GDPR and Code of Conduct	Clerk	
<b>244</b>	Contact Sarah Abercrombie – Chair of Sussex Wildlife	Clerk	