

Minutes of Bramber Parish Council (BPC) Ordinary Meeting

Held on 1 April 2026

Present:

- Cllrs A Blakelock (Chair), H Bayford, S Blakelock, D Croker, M Croker, M Tilley.

Members of the public:

- District Cllr R Noel

58. Apologies for absence

Cllrs S Green, D Goodall and D Kitson

59. Declarations of interest

Cllr M Croker declared that he was a member of Sustainable Travel Committee Steering Group.

60. Minutes of previous meetings

The draft minutes of the BPC Ordinary Council Meeting on 4 March 2026, were agreed without amendment and signed by the Chair.

61. Public session

No questions from the floor.

62. Matters arising

62a Toilet door replacement – the Clerk reported that the agreed contractor would be installing new toilet door on 9 April and that she would be arranging for the Council’s regular locksmith to attach an automatic electric lock once this is complete.

62 b BPC Asset Register - the Clerk displayed and circulated copies of the updated asset register. The renewal insurance cost for all items 2026-27 is due in April and listed under item 65 a. The Clerk agreed to confirm whether the insurance replacement values would be subject to conditions.

62 c Toilet cleaner service contract – the Clerk reported that she had received the service contract template supplied by Cllr Green’s HR consultant and would adapt this to meet BPC needs and circulate it for Full Council approval.

62 d BPC Annual Parish Meeting speaker – the Clerk confirmed that she had invited Pete Crawford, HDC Parks and Countryside Manager, to give a talk on Bramber Brooks at the BPC Annual Meeting. He had confirmed that he, or a member of the Parks and Countryside team, would be happy to present.

63. Emergency Plan (EP)

Cllr Bayford reported that the Bramber Society had emailed members requesting feedback on 'vulnerable residents' and she had posted a notification on the Facebook site *Spotted*; neither had produced any responses within the Parish. She confirmed she would be speaking with the EP Coordinator, Mike Corless, about next steps to take. Rachael Rainbow will be arranging a presentation on residents' Riparian Rights at a forthcoming Bramber Social meeting.

64. Reports

64 a Horsham District Council (HDC) report – Cllr R Noel updated the Council:

- Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – the Government has deferred its decision on the composition of the new Sussex Unitary Authorities until after the elections in May. After the recent consultation there are now two compositions being considered with regards to HDC: HDC, Chichester and Crawley; or HDC, Crawley and Mid Sussex.
- Elections – the pre-election period has begun, and final party candidates will be announced on 10 April. Besides County Council elections, Horsham Town will be holding its own elections with nine new wards. This has produced several 'Horsham-centric' announcements e.g. the new Bishopric improvements, Dukes Square development and the ongoing theatre renovation.
- Local Plan – the Local Plan is moving forward, and the new Inspector appears determined to make it work. He is also holding Mid Sussex hearings and hoping that both Plans work together. Preliminary talks will take place from 21 April for 3 or 4 days, with further hearings in September, consultation in December and possibly an agreed Plan in March/April 2027. It is expected that HDC will have to absorb some of Crawley's unmet housing needs; but as HDC's present shortfall is 2-3000 over the period, much of this could be absorbed with one new strategic site.
- Projects/discussions – Waste Food Collections are now working regularly; trees in relation to planning law is under review; and the new NPPF is still to be finalised.

64 b Neighbourhood Wardens (NW) – no update received.

64 c Joint Parishes Climate Action Group (JPCAG) – the Chair confirmed that the next meeting would be held on 8 April.

She presented an updated Bramber Climate Action Plan (BPCAP) proposing that our two priority areas for the JPCAG could be: To make a safer crossing of the bypass at Castle Lane; and to make safer the exit/entry to the western river footpath from the Beeding Bridge. BPC to investigate whether an overgrown hedge could be cut back, whether double yellow lines could be painted on road leading up to Beeding Bridge, and whether the path could be diverted down through Bramber Brooks for a safer exit onto The Street.

The updated BPCAP and priority areas were approved unanimously.

64 d Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee (JPCC) – Cllr S Blakelock reported no update.

64 e Joint Parishes Youth Committee (JPYC) – Cllr Bayford reported there had been no meeting.

64 f HALC / WSALC – The Chair reported there had been no meeting.

64 g English Heritage/Bramber Castle – Cllr Green was not present for an update.

64 h Village Hall – Cllr Tilley reported there had been no meeting.

64 i Website – Cllr Tilley reported that there had been no significant changes in website visits.

64 j Patient Participation Group (PPG) – Cllr Bayford updated the Council:

- There had been a focus group on Cholesterol; its next focus group would be on Falls Prevention.
- Sessions are planned at the Steyning Medical centre and the Beeding Hub to educate people about System Connect, the medical centre website and the NHS app for booking appointments.
- One nurse has retired; one nurse remains, focussing on women's health
- PPG Chair, Lesley Humber, will be standing down at the next AGM in November

64 k SDNP - Cllr D Croker confirmed that all Councillors had received the link to the last meeting held on 4 March; a highlight was the fact that 100,000 trees had been planted via the Trees for the Downs campaign launched at the end of 2019. The target is now for 1 million trees. The next meeting will be held on 1 July.

65. Finance and general purposes

65 a The following payments for April 2026 were unanimously agreed:

*Paid in month for approval

April payments/invoices to be agreed by BPC	
UBB – Hall hire: meet £20 Bramber Room	£20.00
EDF Energy March 26	£25.07*
Nest Pension payment	£13.93*
Toilet Cleaning – Julie Bakter 13 days @12.60 – March 26	£163.80
Chichester Payroll – March 26 - BPC2298	£15.00
HMRC (PAYE) – March 26 961/KA55973	£160.07
Clerk salary – March 26	£508.93
Clerk expenses – mileage & proportional phone & WiFi expense	£5.70
Bank service charge	£6.00*
JP Neighbourhood Wardens – BPC contribution 2025-26	£8,245.24
Scribe – annual renewal – 31 May 26-27	£532.80
Barawood Publishing – <i>Your Mag</i> full page April 26	£189.00
Business Stream – water supply 2725486/10049022- to Feb 26	£119.15
SLCC sub – 1May26- 30April27	£158.00
Toilet Door replacement – balance of payment	£1044.19
Zurich Insurance renewal – 24 April 26 – 23 April 27	£422.70

65 b

Reconciled Accounts – The reconciled accounts for March 2026 were unanimously agreed and signed – see appendix A.

66. Planning applications

BPC had supported DC/26/0321, Nether Maudlin, Maudlin Lane, Bramber, via email between meetings

67. Other Planning matters

Cllr M Croker confirmed that he had submitted a BPC response to the Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation based on comments raised by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), and the JPCAG.

68. Highways and Public Rights of Way (PROW)

68 a Speedwatch – Cllr S Blakelock reported that there had been two half-hour sessions in The Street and one hour session on Clays Hill, resulting in a total of 40 speeding vehicles being recorded – a slight reduction on Clays Hill from the previous month was noted.

68 b PRoW 3802 (Bostal Road to Coombe Drove) Cllr M Croker reported that there had been a productive meeting between the Chair, himself and the owner of Penland Cottage. This had resulted in a meeting between the Coombe Drove residents' group and the owner, and agreement on a possible solution to reduce the angle of the path.

Cllr M Croker confirmed that there had been no progress with the overhanging branches and collapsed fence between Maudlin Park and Sopers Lane.

68 c Acquisition and positioning of a new Vehicle Activated Signal (VAS) – Cllr M Croker updated the Council. He and Geoff Barnard (Greening Steyning) had met with Mark Golubics, Asst Area Highway Manager, WSCC, who had confirmed that the northern side of the Bramber roundabout didn't look feasible due to the intensity of traffic in both directions. The southern side of the roundabout looked possible with a VAS positioned on the LHS as cars travel in the Shoreham direction and where there is sufficient light for a solar unit.

In the light of recent news coverage of an average speed camera being successfully installed in a Sussex parish, Cllr M Croker suggested that a final decision regarding a new VAS should be considered at the next meeting; there would still be time to submit a Community Highways Scheme Application if required.

68 d Relocation of the MVAS - Cllr M Croker confirmed that the BPC MVAS was now permanently positioned outside St Mary's House' gardens.

69. Governance

69 a Asset transfer – the Clerk confirmed that there had been no update since HDC issued its Parish Community Asset Transfer Process document.

70. Communications

The Chair reported that April issue of *Your Mag* was not yet widely available so this would be brought back to the next meeting.

71. Consultations

The Chair reported that Andrew Griffiths, MP, Arundel and South Downs, might be launching a consultation on the use of average speed cameras (see item 68 c).

72. Correspondence.

The Chair reported that she had received five items of correspondence:

- A Shoreham resident had reported that non-building materials had been surfacing along the White Bridge path. The resident said that he was getting in touch with the White Bridge contractors, so it was agreed to take no action at this time.
- Greening Steyning Open Eco Houses – there would be a launch on 11 April at the Repair Cafe – details are on the website.
- Community Governance Review – a letter had been received from Steyning Parish Council regarding local parishes working together on projects/activities, with a view to putting

forward suggestions during HDC's Community Governance Review. It was agreed that BPC should stay engaged with the local parishes, and open to future possibilities.

- 4 Sight donation request – the Clerk had received a letter from the charity 4 Sight requesting a donation as it currently supports five parishioners. After discussion it was decided to decline the request preferring residents to donate on an individual basis if they so wished to do so.

73. Other Parish matters

Clerk's Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) Training – the Clerk gave a full overview of the CiLCA training she was undertaking and distributed a handout describing the benefits of General Power of Competence which BPC would be eligible for once she was qualified.

74. Items for the next agenda

Update on Bramber Brooks.

74. Date of next meeting

BPC Annual Parish Meeting is on 6 May 2026 at 6.30 pm at Upper Beeding Village Hall followed by the BPC Ordinary (?) Parish Council meeting.

BPC Planning Meeting subject to the receipt of planning applications.

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Appendix A - below

