

Minutes of Bramber Parish Council (BPC) Ordinary Meeting

Held on 18 June 2025

Present:

- Cllrs A Blakelock (Chair), H Bayford, S Blakelock, M Croker (Vice-Chair), D Croker, D Goodall, D Kitson.

Members of the public:

- None

86. Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Green, Tilley and District Councillor Noel.

87. Declarations of interest

None

88. Minutes of previous meeting

The draft minutes of the BPC Ordinary Council Meeting on 14 May 2025, were agreed subject to noted amendments and signed by the Chair.

89. Matters Arising

The Chair requested an update regarding the collapsed Downs Link sign at the intersection of Roman Road and De Broase Way, the bent sign at the intersection of Castle Lane and the A283, and the overgrown cycle way along the Bramber section of the A283. Cllr Bayford reported that the collapsed Roman Road sign had now been fixed; and the Clerk confirmed that both the bent sign at the Castle Lane intersection and the overgrown cycle way had both been reported to West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and she would follow this up to ensure progress was made.

90. Joint Parishes Climate Action Plan

The Chair reported that a meeting is planned for 16 July with Brighton and Hove Energy Services Coop to talk to the group about community owned local energy, and that she would report back after this meeting.

91. Reports

91.1 HDC Councillor's report – Cllr Croker updated the Council:

- In the absence of no approved HDC Local Plan, the District housing target could rise from 777 per year to 1,338 per year; and as there is only a year's supply of housing this would tilt the balance towards approving housing development.

- Water neutrality – the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme – allowing developers to buy surplus credits from another area in Sussex - is close to becoming operational; the net result of this would likely be an influx of housing development proposals including those already known about (such as 3000 properties West of Ifield) and those previously refused.
- HDC Cabinet is still working on a response to the Local Plan Inspector's report - whether to go to court or to accept the outcome.

91.2 SCDP The White Bridge Link – the Chair reported that Southern Gas had set up compounds at the end of King's Barn Lane and at the Saltings, Upper Beeding, with the intention of putting the gas pipeline under the river and work is expected to take five weeks. Once the gas pipeline has been laid then the bridge can be built. Cllr S Blakelock informed the Council that the small bridge halfway between Kings Barn Lane and the White Bridge is delaying work as this requires reinforcement to allow the lorries to access the White Bridge.

91.3 LWCP (Local Walking and Cycling Plan) – Cllr S Blakelock updated the Council: Geoff Barnard (Steyning Greening) has suggested that each of the parishes (Bramber, Steyning and Upper Beeding) takes on one of the urgent priorities of the LWCP with Steyning taking on King's Barn Lane, Upper Beeding the school and Bramber the Castle Lane crossing. Funding is available from the WSCC Community Highways Scheme but the deadline is 31 July 2025 so the forms would need to be complete, and a plan made before the next BPC meeting on 23 July.

Cllr Croker asked if WSSC Cllr Linehan had been in touch about this. The Chair confirmed that she had only been in touch with Cllr Linehan regarding the reduction of the speed limit from 50 to 40 mph which would need to be in place before a safe crossing could be created. Cllr S Blakelock reported that Geoff Barnard had been chasing Cllr Linehan for his support with no success to date.

It was agreed that the 31 July 2025 deadline for this year's funding application was too tight and that Cllr S Blakelock would investigate application requirements for next year.

91.4 Neighbourhood Wardens – the Wardens' May report had been circulated. There was nothing to report within the Parish, but there had been several incidents regarding E-scooters. The Chair also noted that Mike Pearce would be retiring on 20 June.

91.5 Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee – no update to report.

91.6 Joint Parishes Youth Committee – Cllr Bayford reported that there had not been a meeting, but she had emailed Youth Leader, Vicky, regarding the carpark planters and their upkeep. Vicky had confirmed that they would be running a focus group on looking after the planters. They had also put up bamboo loops for hanging CDs to deter birds. The Chair emphasised the need for the youth group to take the planters on as its project.

91.7 HALC – The Chair reported that there was a meeting planned for 19 June and that she would report back to Council after this.

91.8 English Heritage/Bramber Castle – Cllr Green had reported that there was no update.

91.9 Village Hall – Cllr Tilley had reported that the Hall has £45,000 in the bank but that there are several urgent works required including boiler, fuse box and signage repairs, and four window replacements.

91.10 Website – there was no update to report.

91.11 Patient Participation Group - Cllr Bayford confirmed that there was no update to report.

92 Finance and general purposes

92.1 The following payments were unanimously agreed:

June invoices to be agreed by BPC on 18 June 2025	
Glasdon – gateway SI912925	£1250.87
Scribe Accounts – Starboard Systems Lt – annual (to 31 May 26)	£414.72
SLCC Annual Sub – 50% share with Woodmancote Parish Council	£95.00
Upper Beeding and Bramber Village Hall – May 25 (Main hall) - BBVH899	£20.00
Toilet Cleaning – Julie Bakter 7x31 @12.60 – May 25	£390.60
Clerk expenses – May and June 25 – mileage @ 36.9p/mile (2x meeting, 2x noticeboards, 1x toilets); printer cartridges – colour & b/w £28.00	£30.22
WSCC – Annual Street lighting cost 24-25 – energy & maintenance	£1,217.66

92.2 Annual Governance and Accountability Review (AGAR) 2024-25 – The Clerk explained that it had not been possible to amass all the documents required for the internal and external audits in time for 18 June and requested that a BPC Extraordinary Meeting (EOM) be held before the deadline of the end of June to review and agree AGAR 2024-25. This was agreed: the Clerk would book the committee room at The Steyning Centre for an early evening EOM on 26 or 27 June.

92.3 Donation to *Bramber Comes Alive* – The Chair explained that the Steyning ad District Community Partnership’s Visitor and Tourist Group was organising *Bramber Comes Alive* on 20 July 2025 and had requested a donation. She drew the Council’s attention to the very positive publicity that this would give the village. It was unanimously agreed to donate £300 to the event.

92.4 Citizens’ Advice Bureau (CAB) grant application – The Chair drew the Council’s attention to a grant application submitted to BPC to sustain CAB’s continued work within the Parish. It was unanimously agreed to give a £50 donation to CAB.

92.5 BPC payroll administrator – The Chair reported that WSCC was not accepting new payroll administration accounts, but Chichester Payroll (which previously administered payroll for the previous Clerk) was happy to continue the role for the current Clerk.

93 Governance

93.1 BPC Standing Orders 2025 – The revised BPC Standing Orders 2025 were reviewed and unanimously accepted by Council subject to amending a Woodmancote reference to Bramber.

93.2 BPC Financial Regulations 2025 – The revised BPC Financial Regulations 2025 were reviewed and unanimously accepted by Council subject to insertion to 10.4 ‘without first gaining consent of the Council’.

93.3 BPC Financial Risk Assessment 2025 – The revised BPC Financial Risk Assessment 2025 was reviewed and accepted unanimously.

94 Planning applications

94.1 DC/25/0739 - amendments to DC/21/2233 - demolition of 37 King's Barn Lane for the provision of vehicle access to the A283.

Cllr Croker explained that this application related to the development at Glebe Farm in Steyning and changes to phasing of works to allow the roundabout to be built within the first phase, so delaying the requirement for CIL payments. It was unanimously decided to make no comment.

95 Other planning matters

SDNP/25/02295/DCOND - Annington Mere Farmhouse Annington Road Bramber. It was unanimously agreed to resubmit BPC comments submitted at the time of the original application.

96 Highways and Public Rights of Way

96.1 Village gateway – The Chair reported that the gateway had been erected and thanked Cllr Croker for all his work in overseeing the project. The Clerk confirmed that she would submit an S106 claim for the gateway once the Wilbur invoice had been received and paid.

96.2 Community Speedwatch – Cllr S Blakelock updated the Council: There have been three sessions planned – two before the erection of the gateway and one afterwards to assess the impact of the gateway; the group has also put up a couple of Speedwatch signs. Chris Broadly had been in touch regarding training; he and Cllr Kitson have been properly trained, but Carole Powell has not been, so training needs to be organised. BPC is using Speedwatch equipment that is on loan from Shipley Parish Council (via the previous Clerk). He confirmed that at the next meeting on 8 July they would establish exact ownership of the equipment; and the plan in future would be to check speed both coming up and going down Clays Hill.

96.3 Other highways and PRW issues – The Chair reported that a resident had informed the Council that The Maudlyn Farm footpath sign was not pointing in the right direction; the Access Ranger has now been alerted to this and is responding in order to ensure it points the right way.

97 Other Parish matters

97.1 Emergency Plan – The Chair confirmed that there would be an Emergency Plan workshop with HDC's Emergency Planning Officer, Tony Skelding, on 12 September, 10am to 12 noon at the Beeding and Bramber Village Hall. This would be attended by the Neighbourhood Wardens and members of the Bramber Society.

97.2 Planters by the The Taste of India Restaurant – The Chair reported that Roger Potter had contacted the restaurant owners, and they have agreed to look after the two circular planters in front of the restaurant and will contact Ferring Nursery for 'co-ordinated' flowers with the village hanging baskets.

97.3 Village mowing – The Chair reported that Danny Flyn (DF), the mowing contractor, had mowed from Beeding bridge to the flyover, as agreed by the Council, for £90. Cllr Goodall had also suggested that this be extended from the flyover to the Green grassy triangle and DF had quoted £75 for this. And at the Annual Parish Meeting in May a member of the Bramber Society requested that a 'fire break' be cut behind the caravans and DF has quoted £75 for this. So in total the mowing would cost a total of £240. Cllr Tilley has since suggested that the Council includes the strimming around the benches along the river path and going beyond the grassy triangle to the second bridge.

97.4 Overgrown vegetation – The Chair reported that a parishioner had requested that the vegetation at the point where pedestrians cross from the A283 roundabout to access Maudlin Lane was overgrown making it hazardous to cross. The Clerk agreed to request that WSCC cuts this back at the same time as cutting the cycle path from Castle Lane – see item 89.

97.5 Assets – The Chair drew the Council's attention to some BPC assets which could bring in income after devolution; for example, the free carpark could become a paying carpark, or the bus shelter could request advertising, or Bramber Brooks could become a shared asset with Steyning. She urged Councillors to give this some thought.

98. Consultations

Cllr M Croker drew the Council's attention to a SDNP Partnership Management Plan 2026-31 consultation. It was agreed that Councillors could submit their own comments as individuals rather than creating a collaborative BPC response.

99. Correspondence

The Clerk reported that she had had notification of a forthcoming webinar on 1 July relating the consultation mentioned under item 98. Cllr D Croker agreed to attend this as the BPC SDNP representative.

100. Items for the next agenda

Cllr A Blakelock noted that the next newsletter in *Your Mag* would need to be discussed at the next meeting.

101. Date of next meeting

23 July 2025 at 7pm at Upper Beeding Village Hall. BPC Planning Meeting subject to the receipt of planning applications.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

