

Minutes of Bramber Parish Council (BPC) Ordinary Meeting

Held on 08 October 2025

Present:

- Cllrs A Blakelock (Chair), Bayford, S Blakelock, D Croker, Tilley, Kitson

Members of the public:

- None

146. Apologies for absence

Cllrs Green, Goodall, Horsham District Councillors M Croker and R Noel

147. Declarations of interest

None.

148. Minutes of previous meetings

The draft minutes of the BPC Ordinary Council Meeting on 03 September 2025, were agreed subject to noted amendments and signed by the Chair.

149. Public session

No questions from the floor.

150. Matters arising

The Chair confirmed that the van and tent camped behind St Mary's had now been removed following a letter from SDNP's Emma Goodwin (ref September minutes, item 139).

151. Joint Parishes Climate Action Group (JPCAG)

The Chair confirmed that there would be a meeting on 15 October with an update to follow at November's BPC meeting.

152. Emergency Plan (EP)

The Chair reported that the WP workshop on 12 September had taken place (led by HDC's Emergency Officer, Tony Skelding) during which attendees were divided into two groups to 'populate' the new draft EP 2025. Two coordinators were appointed from each group: Cllr Bayford and Rachael Rainbow. It was agreed that Cllr Bayford and Rachael Rainbow would meet up on 21 October to draw up a final draft.

153. Reports

153.a HDC Councillor's report – The Chair read the HDC report in Cllr Noel's absence:

- Bramber Brooks is now open to the public, and there appear to be no further objections from any members of the public. The new White Bridge is now in place, but not yet accessible by the public footpath.
- The Local Plan. No reply as yet from the Inspector regarding the HDC request to reconsider his original statement, and therefore it is expected, nine months later, that his original ruling stands and that we have to go back to Regulation 18, starting work on a new plan.
- HDC filed for a Judicial Review against the Inspector's decision that the site at Horsham Golf & Fitness should be developed. The court advised that it would be upholding the Inspector's decision and therefore this site would be going ahead, and HDC has dropped its objection.
- Local Government Review. Horsham had three meetings in a row at the end of last month, a Scrutiny committee, Council and then Cabinet, where Members voted for 'Option B2' to be submitted to MHCLG as our preferred choice for the makeup of our local Unitary Authority, which comprises the present Districts of Horsham, Crawley and Mid Sussex to join together, as opposed to the whole of West Sussex to be the authority over this area. There were several other combinations submitted by other Districts and Boroughs, and the eventual decision by Government will be announced early next year.

153 b The White Bridge Link – The Chair reported that the new bridge had been anticipated to be lifted into place at 11 am on 7th October when a crowd of residents gathered. But it wasn't until 4 pm that the bridge was set in place. It is planned to open at the end of October/early November. There are two paths to be finished: The Bridge to the pumping station, and the Bridge going up to the Church.

153 c LWCP (Local Walking and Cycling Plan) – No meeting or update to report.

153 d Neighbourhood Wardens – The Chair commented that the September report had not highlighted any specific issues in Bramber; Upper Beeding had experienced reports of anti-social behaviour.

153 e Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee – No meeting or update to report.

153 f Joint Parishes Youth Committee – Cllr Bayford confirmed that a meeting would take place on 9 October with a report to follow.

153 g HALC – The Chair reported that the HALC AGM would be taking place on 4 November at the AMEX Stadium. She also highlighted two forthcoming training courses: 11 November – Introduction to Planning; and 18 November – Updates in Planning.

153 h English Heritage/Bramber Castle – In Cllr Green's absence the Chair updated the Council: The access drive to St Nicholas Church and the Castle required tarmac repair at a cost of £32-34,000 according to English Heritage. As the ownership is unclear it was agreed to ask Cllr Croker to investigate the deeds. The Clerk advised the work might be funded by the Wilson Memorial Trust on the grounds of improved accessibility.

153 i Village Hall – No meeting or update to report.

153 j Website – Cllr Tilley reported that website hosting cost £200 for two years had been paid; Visits had returned to average – 232 during September – after a 'spike' in August; and the link to the 'Minutes' page had now been corrected for access on all devices.

153 k Patient Participation Group (PPG) - Cllr Bayford updated the council following a meeting on 30 September: Two volunteer magazine distributors are retiring so the PPG is looking for volunteers to replace them. The Group has received a £2,500 grant from the Wilson Memorial Trust and an equivalent is expected next year. There is now a Surgery Charter stating that it must be open for appointments from 8.30am to 6.30pm and respond within 24 hours.

Staff - a new diabetes nurse is joining in December, another nurse is undergoing diabetes training and a long-term condition/diabetes specialist nurse is also joining - the pharmacy is supporting her training.

Upper Beeding Surgery – a poster informing patients of the surgery closure is on the BPC noticeboards and website and in *Your Mag*; the surgery is looking to rent additional rooms at the Steyning Medical Centre to accommodate more patients.

154. Finance and general purposes

154 a The following payments for October 2025 were unanimously agreed:

October invoices to be agreed by BPC on 08 Oct 2025	
Business Stream – water supply to toilets – ref 2725486	£106.06
EDF Energy Sept 25 - KI-A0E97367-0016-1	£73.00*
UBB – Hall hire: meet £16 Bramber Room.	£16.00
Nest Pension payment – Aug & Sept – 2x£11.61 ref IT000008698237	£23.22*
HMRC (PAYE) – Sept 25 = £123.40	£123.40
Toilet Cleaning – Julie Bakter 30 @12.60 – Sept 25	£378.00
Clerk expenses – Mileage – notices & meetings 8x 36.9p	£2.95
Clerk salary	£493.32
Chichester Payroll Services - BPC2191	£15.00
Ferring Nurseries – inv 24405 – Sept 25	£2706.72
Toilet supplies – 365 Direct Order 1000277069 - rolls, bleach, cleaner	£144.77
Bank service charge	£6.00*
Cllr Tilley – projector stand	£11.69
Parish Online - .GOV domain names – Oct 25-26 – inv 45UF005-0013	£312.00
Moore External Auditor- 333280	£283.50
UBB – Hall fire: EP meet BBVH1031	£20.00

*Paid in advance for approval

The chair noted that the clerk should receive 4 further contributions to the NEST Pension to cover the months of April, May, June and July. She suggested the clerk enquire about how best to do this.

154 b Reconciled Accounts – The reconciled accounts for September 2025 were unanimously agreed and signed – see appendix A.

154 c BPC Property Insurance - The Clerk displayed an up-to-date asset value list and reported the following BPC insurance company (Gallagher) requirements:

1. Security - locks to conform to BS 3621 for both external and internal locks of stores and property.
2. Servicing – machinery/equipment to be professionally and regularly serviced.

3. Usage – BPC Councillors, staff and volunteers must be carrying out Council business and not within the curtilage of their individual properties.
4. Record-keeping – regular inventories and equipment servicing to be recorded and dated.

It was agreed that: The Chair and Cllr Bayford would take an inventory of all items currently stored in the equipment store, isolate items that required immediate servicing/replacing and the Clerk would obtain three professional servicing quotes accordingly.

The Clerk would obtain three professional locksmith quotes to install BS 3621 compliant locks for the toilets, toilet store and equipment store; new key holders would be Cllrs Bayford, Tilley, the Clerk and the toilet cleaner, Julie Bakter.

Sundry items, such as the Bramber Society's Christmas and Remembrance items, would be moved to the toilet store.

Cllr Tilley noted that the Bramber/Upper Beeding bridge fence was a shared asset and requested that the Clerk establishes which section and when the fence was erected.

154 d Requested costs – The Clerk reported that the cost for the revised CiLCA clerk's training course would be £450 for the course and £450 for the WSALC training sessions. The Council agreed to support the Clerk in becoming CiLCA qualified as a benefit to both BPC and the Clerk.

The Clerk reported that the cost of a full-page advertisement in *Your Mag* is £189. As the offer is on a flexible basis it was agreed to review the publication of the BPC newsletter on an ongoing basis.

154 e BPC Budget update/planning – The Clerk displayed the 2025/26 budget summary for end of quarter two (previously circulated) and a colour-coded spreadsheet denoting areas of 'overspend'. She emphasised that although there were some 'unbudgeted' items which had prompted over expenditure, the Council was due a previously unclaimed £1,120.56 VAT reclaim for 2024/25, the second instalment of the HDC Cleansing Grant and \$106 money to offset the cost of the village gateway (see item 157 b). The Clerk agreed to circulate the 'colour-coded' spreadsheet.

The Clerk explained that November would begin the process of deciding the 2026/27 BPC Budget and that she would circulate a draft budget prior to the November meeting. The final budget/precept request to be agreed no later than the January meeting.

Note: District Cllr Noel and Cllr M Croker arrived at 8.10pm.

155. Planning applications

CA/25/0061 - Bartons, Little Drove Bramber - Surgery to 1x White Poplar. It was unanimously agreed to submit 'no objection'.

156. Other Planning matters

DC/25/1521, DC/25/1423 and DC/25/1427 – The Chair noted that BPC had submitted 'no objection' for each of these planning applications received since the September meeting.

157. Highways and Public Rights of Way (PROW)

157 a Speedwatch – Cllr S Blakelock updated the Council: There had been two sessions undertaken since the last meeting with an average of less than 10 speeding vehicles recorded at each session; during 2024 the average was 15-20 vehicles, so the figures indicate that the Clays Hill gateway is making a positive difference.

157 b S106 money – The Clerk reported that despite delay (due to ‘technical details’ related to the gateway inscription of a road rather than a village or town) WSCC Cllr Paul Linehan had now lent his support to BPC’s S106 funding application for the Clays Hill gateway. The sum of £2367.39 would now be transferred to BPCs Unity Bank current account.

157 c Overgrown vegetation along the A283 cycle way and around the Street roundabout – The Chair reported that despite repeated attempts to report the overgrowth, the WSCC Highways Department had still not cut the vegetation back. Cllr Bayford reported that some branches along the cycle way had been cut but it remained hazardous for cyclists. Cllr M Croker had been informed that the work was scheduled for August but it had not been undertaken.

157 d Community Highways Scheme – Cllr M Croker reported that a response to the funding application was still awaited.

157 e Walks for All – The Chair reported that local Public Path’s Inspector (PPI), Christine Supiot, had not been able to undertake the footpath report this year due to a broken ankle. Another PPI has now been appointed to compile the report which will be submitted to WSCC for it to prioritise remedial PROW work across the whole district.

Cllr M Croker reported that trees along the path between Maudlin Park and Sopers Lane were overgrowing the road. A resident had reported this to Cllr P Linehan and the HDC arboriculturist. The result has been a commitment to cut back one small tree over the next 3-4 months. Residents are very concerned about falling branches and safety.

158. Communications

The Chair updated the Council: Remembrance Sunday Services would take place at 8.30am at St Nicholas’ Church and at 10.30 at St Peter’s Church. She and Cllr S Blakelock would be helping the Bramber Society to put up the poppies along The Street.

A HDC Winter Warmer event will be taking place in Storrington on 23 October and posters have been posted on the BPC noticeboards and website.

Cllr Tilley reported that during the recent HDC Bramber Brooks tour, the HDC Director of Communities, Paul Anderson, had mentioned that it is not planning to offer to transfer Bramber Brooks to parishes, but is intending to maintain all parks and countryside sites under the existing department at HDC.

159. Other Parish Matters

The Chair reported that the toilets had been vandalised with graffiti. The Clerk confirmed that she had reported this to the Wardens and would follow this up.

Cllr S Blakelock expressed his unease that St Nicholas’ Church was flying the St George’s flag rather than the Union Jack during the period of Remembrance of all UK armed forces.

Note: Cllr Kitson left at 8.35pm.

160. Consultations – None to report.

161. Correspondence

The Chair drew the Council's attention to following correspondence:

A Steyning residents' email (previously circulated) concerning planning application DC/25/1324 and the Bramber Brooks access route. She confirmed that the clerk had replied, pointing out that the application had been fully discussed at the BPC September meeting and the resulting comments had been posted on the HDC Planning portal.

A Bramber parishioner specialising in the people and places of Bramber had contacted the Clerk regarding electoral registers for Bramber Parish from 2005, 2010 and 2015 on behalf of Steyning Museum which keeps 5 yearly records for new residents to find out who lived in their houses. He is writing a book on the pre-WWI people and houses in Bramber.

The Chair had received an email regarding the dangers of the Downslink crossing over the A283. She had contacted the Highways Department, but it is unlikely that the Council will get anything done bearing in mind that pedestrians can use the underpass. Cllr Bayford suggested a VAS similar to that operating in Upper Beeding outside Dacre Gardens.

162. Items for next agenda

The Chair requested that the results of the Emergency store inventory and draft Emergency Plan along with the 2026/27 BPC budget be included in the next meeting agenda.

163. Date of next meeting

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

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Appendix A

A	Bank Reconciliation at 31/08/2025		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2025		22,500.95
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2025 - 31/08/2025		20,148.37
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2025 - 31/08/2025		42,649.32
			23,909.99
	Cash in Hand 31/08/2025 (per Cash Book)		18,739.33
B	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash 30/09/2025	0.00	
	Cashbook / Lloyds Bank 30/09/2025	0.00	
	Unity Bank - current 30/09/2025	11,486.66	
	Unity Bank - savings 30/09/2025	8,353.99	
			19,840.65
	Less unrepresented payments		1,101.32
			18,739.33
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
	Adjusted Bank Balance		18,739.33
	A = B Checks out OK		