



## **Minutes of the Highclere Parish Council Meeting**

**Westridge Studio**

**Tuesday 10 June at 7.30pm**

**Members Present:** Cllr York (chair), Cllr Easton, Cllr Bartholomew, Cllr Falconer

**Clerk:** Amy White

**In attendance:** Three members of the public, Colin Wall (NPSG)

### **16/25 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr MacIver sent his apologies, Cllr Easton arrived at 7:45pm.

### **1. 17/25 Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **2. 18/25 To agree Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 20 May 2025**

The Annual Meeting Minutes of 20 May 2025 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman, Cllr York.

### **3. 19/25 Matters arising from Annual Meeting held on 20 May 2025**

None outstanding.

### **5. 20/25 Public participation**

Two members of the public spoke about their future plans for Highclere Stud. The parish council was unable to comment on the plans until there is a formal application.

### **6. 21/25 Reports from County and Borough Councillors**

Cllr Izett sent a report to councillors in advance:

*There has been a huge amount of activity and work by the existing 15 Hampshire councils in order to meet the govt deadline of submitting worked up proposals for unitary councils by September 26th.*

*KPMG have been appointed to lead the modelling using data supplied by all the councils. They have looked at 44 different metrics including economic suitability, geographical suitability, housing, population, local identity, education, tax base, council debt, crucial service protection, transformation costs, unlocking development etc. The various unitary options are ranked high, medium or low against each metric.*

*This evaluation has reduced geographical options for unitaries from 12 to 8 to 3. The top scoring option is the 4 unitary case ie North Hants, Mid Hants and Southampton and Portsmouth. The 3 option alternatives are not too far behind.*

*HCC has left the process along with East Hants DC. Gosport haven't formally gone from the process but seem to want to stay as they are. On the day after HCC left they announced that PWC are advising them and undertaking a public survey. HCC will presumably submit their own proposal to govt.*

*This has left 12 councils including BDBC to collaborate with a proposal to govt. Detailed work on providing evidence that important services such as adult social care, education, children's services, waste collection can be provided well and sustainably is underway via KPMG.*

*Public engagement will be happening including detailed surveys for North Hants across the 3 constituent parts of Basingstoke, Hart and Rushmoor. Local business groups and town and parish councils will be contacted.*

*The 12 councils will synchronise their formal approvals to meet the 26th September deadline with a scrutiny committee meeting chaired by me being held in early September. The govt will decide on the proposals put forward sometime in Spring 2026 to allow for shadow unitary elections in May 2027 and operational commencement of new unitary councils by May 2028.*

*There is a view that no unitary will be able to fund the cost of proper adult social care and therefore there will need to be a national NHS based system or new unitaries will have to be allowed to jack up council taxes.*

## **7. 22/25 Planning**

*For full responses, please visit the Basingstoke and Deane planning page.*

- T/00220/25/TPO at 60 Penwood Heights Penwood- Response sent: No objection
- T/00246/25/TPO Irie Cottage Foxs Lane Penwood- Response sent: No objection
- T/00252/25/TPO Bennett House Andover Road- Response sent: No objection
- 25/01234/PIP Land Adjacent To Plantation Cottage Westridge- Response sent: Objection
- 25/01240/HSE Larch House Westridge (not on the agenda but considered not contentious)- Response to be sent: No objection

The BDBC Call for Sites consultation has now been published. There are two re-promotions and a total of 7 sites identified for Highclere parish.

<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/cfs-2025-publication>

## **8. 23/25 HPC Action Plan**

The Glebe: This is still in action. Despite chasing by Cllr Bartholomew, Savills has still not provided the heads of terms.

National Landscapes: Cllr York will lead on promoting Highclere within the National Landscape- to be added to subsequent agenda.

Lengthsman- see below.

**9. 24/25 Lengthsman tasks**

The lengthsman is due in July with 7.5 hrs.

**Action:** Cllr Bartholomew will liaise with David Morrey regarding the pavement opposite The Red House to the footpath entrance which needs clearing of gravel and weeds.

**10. 25/25 Neighbourhood Plan**

Colin Wall attended and provided a brief update on the SEA which has been received. There are a few items that need amendment. After this is clarified, the plan will move to regulation 14.

**11. 26/25 Financial Matters**

**a. Accounts for payment**

Bank reconciliation as at 31 May 2025:

Unity Bank Current Account: £14405.61

Unity Bank Savings Account: £45513.41

Total: £: **59919.02**

**Internal Audit**

The internal audit is complete and the report is posted on the website.

Items for consideration:

1. Accounting System: The accounts of the council are now maintained on Scribe. This allows all income and expenditure receipts to be attached to the ledger.  
Recommendation: To save paper and filing space and improve transparency, invoices can be saved as PDF and members can check them in the ledger.  
*HPC response:* Clerk to confirm with Cllr MacIver that this would be a workable option.
2. Earmarked reserves: The earmarked reserves of the council have not changed since last year despite spending on the relevant items. (also raised last year).  
Recommendation: All EMRs should be reviewed at budget setting and year end to clarify what, when, where and how much.  
*HPC Response:* Noted
3. Precept approval: The final budget and precept amount were not minuted.  
Recommendation: Please ensure that the amount being precepted is clearly minuted each year in January.  
*HPC Response:* Noted
4. Vacancies: The council has three vacancies. Recommendation: Active steps should be taken to engage with all parts of the parish to recruit new members.  
*HPC Response:* to initiate a recruitment drive.
5. Village Hall Charity: On the Charity Commission website, the PC is still listed in error as a trustee of the [Village Hall](#). This disclosure disagrees with the published accounts of the charity. Recommendation: Other trustees should be appointed and the parish removed.  
*HPC Response:* Clerk raised this with HVH chair; the listing of the PC as a custodian trustee is correct with the Charity Commission but the public view is incorrect. HVH Chair to make necessary amendments.

The Clerk has sent all of the required forms to BDO external auditor.  
The dates for the exercise of public rights has been set as 10 June to 21 July inclusive.

**12. 27/25 Feedback from the APM 20 May**

Overall the feedback has been positive from the APM, especially the attendance of the Bewley Homes representative, Emily Woods. The format of the meeting worked well and it was agreed that a specific focus encourages attendance.

**13. 28/25 Items to take forward to subsequent meeting**

National Landscapes, policies and procedures for updating.

**Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 08 July 2025, Westridge Studio**

**Actions from 10 June 2025 Meeting**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Person</b>
<b>24/25</b>	Cllr Bartholomew will liaise with David Morrey regarding the pavement opposite The Red House to the footpath entrance which needs clearing of gravel and weeds.	<b>Cllr Bartholomew</b>