



Minutes of the Highclere Parish Council Meeting

Westridge Studio

Tuesday 08 July at 7.30pm

Members Present: Cllr York (chair), Cllr Easton, Cllr Bartholomew, Cllr MacIver

Clerk: Amy White

In attendance: Colin Wall (NPSG), two parishioners

1. 29/25 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Falconer, Cllr Izett

2. 30/25 Declarations of Interest

None.

3. 31/25 To agree Minutes of Meeting held on 10 June 2025

The Minutes of 10 June 2025 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman, Cllr York.

4. 32/25 Matters arising from Meeting held on 10 June 2025

Actions completed.

5. 33/25 Public participation

Two parishioners joined the meeting to observe the meeting with a view to becoming members of the Parish Council.

6. 34/25 Reports from County and Borough Councillors

Cllr Izett sent a report to councillors in advance:

The 7 and 7A Bus Services- Andover to Newbury: I understand that these services provided by Stagecoach are likely to be ended from August because of lack of profitability. It would affect residents in Highclere, Penwood and Woolton Hill. I am investigating the truth of the matter urgently and establishing if there is any borough or county subsidy currently and the options for continuing or replacing the service with an alternative.

Draft Neighbourhood Plan: Mike York, Colin Wall and I met the head of planning policy last week at Basingstoke. The increase in housing numbers required by the Govt across the country, combined with a Local Plan that is out of date means that

there is considerable uncertainty about how to securely, in planning terms, proceed with our NP. The advice is we can't stick with the existing LP number for Highclere but if we provide for a greater number of new homes in anticipation of what the new LP will determine, we are at risk of the new NP being negated if the number eventually determined by the new LP is more than we anticipated. This is a completely unsatisfactory position arising from the higher housing target under the NPPF. Clearly difficult decisions on the way forward now need to be taken

Highgates: The latest is that it is with BDBC Legal Dept to determine the basis of legal enforcement action following the retrospective application for consent having been turned down. I have met the chief planner and been in contact with the legal officer to urge them to get a move on, otherwise I will refer it to the CEO. The applicant will be appealing against the refusal so this matter will not come to a conclusion any time soon it appears.

Community Infrastructure Fund: Community and voluntary sector organisations can now apply for grants of between £5,000 and £75,000 from the council following the launch of this year's Community Infrastructure Fund.

Applications can be made for funding to improve current facilities making them more accessible to users, increase income and reduce costs, or make environmental improvements. Groups have until 5pm on Friday 18 July to submit their proposals.

The types of projects eligible for funding could include:

- extending or expanding existing community premises to increase the number of users, widen the community reach, attract new audiences, improve the facilities' sustainability or address gaps in current provision*
- improving and/or modernising existing community premises to ensure continued operation, comply with health and safety requirements, address accessibility issues or attract more users*
- retrofitting of existing community premises to reduce carbon emissions, lower energy bills and support the council's Climate Emergency Action Plan.*

Further information about the fund criteria and application process is available on our website at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/infrastructurefund or by emailing cif@basingstoke.gov.uk.

Local Govt Reorganisation: Residents across the borough are now being asked to share their views on proposals that would see a new unitary authority created for north Hampshire, as part of the government's plans for local government reorganisation.

The options, being further developed, all include a new unitary council for north Hampshire bringing together the areas of Basingstoke and Deane, Hart and Rushmoor.

Each council in Hampshire can each submit their preferred option for the whole of the county to the government by Friday 26 September 2025.

A key part of the councils' work on the options will be understanding how residents, businesses and community groups feel about the changes and what area they think their

future council should cover. Engagement will be launched across the council areas to gather views to help understand what matters most to people and shape how local councils work in the future.

One part of this is a survey developed with Hart District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council to gather views on the north Hampshire unitary council proposal.

The survey is at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/future-councils

There is also a survey on the same web site on the plans for the whole of Hampshire, including north Hampshire. This will also be open from Monday 30 June. It is being run by a group of 12 councils, including us, across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The likely withdrawal of the bus services 7 and 7A from August and the impact of our community's sustainability was then discussed.

Action: Cllr York to liaise with Cllr Izett as he investigates possible sources of funding and options to maintain or replace a transport service.

The value of the Community Infrastructure Fund, and benefits to the parish that it has historically provided was discussed. Our community infrastructure management committees (HVVH and Westridge) are aware of the deadline for bids.

The pending Local Govt reorganisation was discussed. Cllrs York and Easton have registered for the online workshop on 15th July. Cllr Falconer will attend in person.

7 35/25 Neighbourhood Plan update

Colin Wall (NPSG), along with Cllrs York and Izett met with the Head of Planning Policy (BDBC) to discuss the possible progression of our Neighbourhood Plan.

The parish council discussed possible routes forward with our Neighbourhood Plan, including:

- waiting until we are given a new housing requirement number
- continue with our present housing number of 10 (whilst making a case that we could accommodate some in addition to this number). An option could be to use our present site to accommodate for example 15, and make a case that we would definitely get another 5 in 13 years.
- repeat the process already undertaken but for a larger number of houses (noting that there is no financial support available to do this now)

We will not have a new housing requirement number for the parish until November, and this is almost certainly going to be in excess of the 10 previously allocated.

Given that our position as a village in controlling future development is strongest if a neighbourhood plan is in place, Cllr York proposed that we proceed with our present plan, but for an increased number of housing units if possible.

Given the withdrawal of grant funding for developing the plan, the parish council agreed in principle to funding this going forward, subject to some idea of cost. Colin

Wall has agreed to compile figures of what has been spent on NP so far by the parish council.

Action: Colin Wall (NPSG) to talk to Planet, Jessica Wells (Senior Planning Policy Officer), and Donnington Homes to establish feasibility of our proposal and to come back to the Parish Council with a 'suggested position' for our September meeting.

8 36/25 Planning

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

- 25/00733/FUL Land To The South Of Hillside Andover Road- response sent: Objection
- 25/01474/ROC Land At Park View House Church Lane- response to be sent: No objection but clarification on height of fence restrictions on highways

9 37/25 HPC Action Plan

National Landscapes: Cllr York met with a representative of our National Landscape. The parish council is keen to promote the National Landscape. National Landscapes are keen to get involved with Parish Councils.

A meeting of Highclere and East Woodhay Parish Councils with National Landscapes is proposed for October.

Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting with National Landscapes representative and HPC/EWPC.

10 38/25 Financial Matters

a. Accounts for payment

The Clerk presented accounts for payment (see end of Minutes).

Bank reconciliation as at 30 June 2025:

Unity Bank Current Account: £11865.14

Unity Bank Savings Account: £45774.32

Total: £: 57639.46

11 39/25 Items to take forward to subsequent meeting

National Landscapes, policies and procedures for updating.

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 09 September 2025

Actions from 8 July 2025 Meeting

Number	Action	Person
34/25	Cllr York to liaise with Cllr Izett as he investigates possible sources of funding and options to maintain or replace a transport service.	Cllr York
35/25	Consult with Planet, Jessica Wells, and Donnington Homes to establish feasibility of our proposal and to come back to the Parish Council with a 'suggested position' for our September meeting.	Colin Wall
37/25	Arrange a meeting in October for National Landscapes, Highclere and East Woodhay Parish Councils	Clerk