Broadbridge Heath Parish Council

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ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL 3rd NOVEMBER 2025

Present Were:

Cllr Simon Leighton (SL)
Cllr Sarah Chandler (SC)
Cllr Edward Mclennan-Murray (EMM)
Cllr Jeanne Coker (JC)
Cllr Chung Wing Luk (CWL)
Cllr Sam Hazell (SH)
Cllr Terry Oliver (TO) Chair
Cllr Geoff Clark (GC)
Cllr Paul Knapp (PK)

Executive Officer: Anna Branas

Also Present:
Locum Clerk Louise Shaw
James Brookes District Councillor for Broadbridge Heath Ward
One MOP was present.

221/25 **Apologies and Reason for Absence**

CCllr Jonathan Taylor Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Property sent in his apologies prior to the meeting and were duly accepted by the members.

222/25 **Public Speaking**

The MOP addressed the members on their recent application for Parish Councillor. They answered any questions the Cllrs asked.

223/25 **Declarations of Interest and Notifications of changes**

There were no declarations of interest declared.

224/25 **Co-Option of Application**

4.1 Chris Robertson (CR), applicant for co-option, stated that he is looking forward to working with all Councillors and contributing to the Parish Council.
It was* UNANIMOUSLY *agreed that Chris Robertson is appointed as a Parish Councillor. The necessary paperwork was completed and signed by both CR and the Executive Officer.

225/25 **Chair's Announcements**

5.1 The Chair welcomed Chris Robertson and expressed confidence that he would receive full support from Council members and officers as he begins his journey in local government and the Parish Council.
5.2 The Chair then thanked Councillors and their neighbours for their efforts with the poppies, as well as others who had offered to help but were unavailable at the time. Their contribution was much appreciated.
5.3 Finally, the Chair formally thanked the two locum clerks, for their support over the past months during the absence of the Clerk. The Council also noted and appreciated their continued support moving forward.

226/25 **County and District Councillor Reports**

6.1 District Councillors' Updates
DCllr James Brookes provided a brief update on ongoing matters of which the Council is aware, with specific reference to the major development on land south of Broadbridge Way, often referred to as the first formally proposed school site. It was noted that this application is unlikely to come before the District Planning Committee imminently due to a recent report from WSCC Highways Authority. The report recommends that further information and modifications are required for the plans as currently submitted. While the report is not as robust as the Council would have wished, the Council's detailed submission and contributions from concerned residents, surrounding roads affected by traffic, were acknowledged. Key points from the Highways Authority report include:
The junction modelling approach used by the developer does not accurately reflect the impacts of the development, and alternative modelling should be undertaken to assess junction impacts.
The applicant is required to rerun the parking demand calculator, as current results do not align with the development proposals.
Existing concerns around vehicle flows along Sargent Way and the use of the Co-op car park were noted.

The development is expected to result in additional 10am and 9pm peak trips along Sargant Way; these are not considered to create severe impacts or safety concerns, though the wider traffic context has been noted. DCllr James Brookes stated that any updates would be provided as further developments occur.

Regarding wider issues of local government reorganisation and devolution, it was noted that an interim update had been provided by CCllr Mitchell at a recent meeting. The government has responded to Surrey's unitary proposals, which, while not directly comparable to West Sussex, provide some reassurance. Surrey had two proposals—a two-unitary authority or a three-unitary authority structure—with preference for the two-unitary option. The government's comments indicate that a two-unitary authority proposal for West Sussex, supported by all district councils in the county, is a feasible model.

6.2 While DCllr James Brookes was speaking on local government reorganisation, the Chair asked him for an update regarding the Town Council and the number of wards.

DCllr James Brookes explained that he has been principally working on this in his role as Chairman of the Governance Committee. This work arose from a statutory request under the Horsham Blueprint process. A group representing businesses in Central Horsham requested a Community Governance Review of the unparished areas of Horsham Town.

It was noted that Horsham Town currently has some Parished areas, such as North Horsham, but three neighbourhoods—Denne, Trafalgar, and Forest—have neighbourhood councils that do not hold the powers of parishes. Specifically, they are unable to set their own precept and must rely on Horsham District Council (HDC) to levy a special charge, which is then disbursed to the neighbourhood councils.

The outcome of the Community Governance Review indicated clear public support for the creation of a Horsham Town Council encompassing these three unparished areas. Work has been undertaken to create new wards for this proposed Horsham Town Council, effectively establishing a new parish council. The report on this review has now been submitted.

6.3 Cllr SH asked DCllr James Brookes for an update regarding the Section 106 funding for the Charrington Way Project. James confirmed that there is currently no update. Executive Officer will chase for an update.

6.4 The Chair confirmed that the Parish Council had formally written to HDC in September to express its interest in adopting certain HDC-owned properties. The Chair also reported having spoken with the Director of Communities, who advised that HDC is currently reviewing a number of related matters, many of which involve the Parish Council. Once this process is further developed, HDC will likely invite Councillors to an informal meeting where the Director or other officers will discuss the matter in more detail.

6.5 County Councillor Updates

The CCllr was not present, and no report was sent in.

227/25 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

7.1 To approve the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 6th October 2025.
Cllr GC noted that the minutes incorrectly recorded comments for application DC/25/1338 instead of DC/25/1500. The Executive Officer was instructed to correct the comments for application DC/25/1500 and to place the amended minutes on the agenda for the Full Council meeting on 1st December 2025. Cllr GC also noted a minor correction in the previously approved minutes. Under point 20925, the minutes refer to Cllr EMM whereas the correct abbreviation should be Cllr EMM. The correction will be made to reflect the proper three-letter abbreviation. The Executive Officer was instructed to correct this error. Once the amendments have been completed.

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the Chairman would sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

7.2 To approve the minutes from the Finance Committee meeting held
On 20th October 2025.
It was stated that the new Cllr CR had not seen the minutes prior to taking up the post. Therefore, he was unable to vote on the accuracy of them. *It was **AGREED** that the Chairman would sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting*

7.3 The minutes of the Recreation Committee meetings held on 22nd September 2025 were approved and signed at the Full Parish Meeting on 6th October 2025.

228/25 **The Election of a New Vice-Chair**

8.1 The Chair took a moment to thank the resigning Vice-Chair Cllr SH. The Chair expressed appreciation for the Vice-Chair's contributions, noting their valuable advice on Council matters, encouragement, and timely humour. The Chair stated that these contributions were greatly appreciated and conveyed sincere thanks on behalf of the Council.

The Chair of the Council asked the Executive Officer for details of any nominations received. The Executive Officer stated that she had received four nominations from Cllrs for a new Vice-Chair, all of which were for Cllr JC. The Chair asked if Cllr JC would like to stand for election as Vice-Chair. Cllr JC agreed.
It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the new Vice-Chair of Broadbridge Heath Parish Council is Cllr JC. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.

229/25 **Highways Working Party**

9.1 Sargent Way Survey and Road Safety Concerns
Cllr PK proposed that items 9 and 10 be considered together as they relate to the same matter. The main aim was to encourage residents to complete the online survey regarding Sargent Way, which was reported as successful.

Cllr PK highlighted that there had been significant online discussion with residents concerned about the safety of the junction of Byk Way, Churchill Way, and the A264 Broadbridge Heath bypass, following a road accident a few weeks ago. Many residents linked this incident, unfortunately, to the closure of Sargent Way.

The Working Party contacted CCllr Mitchell who reported that, regarding road safety, he had previously written twice to Highways and was reassured that the road was safe. He indicated that he would raise the matter again with Highways if the Parish Council formally requested him to do so. The Council agreed to formally request CCllr CM to escalate safety concerns to Highways, with technical input from Highways engineers.
Collaboration between Working Party and Executive Officer will be undertaken to strengthen the case.

9.2 The Working Party will gather and submit accident statistics and speed data, utilising community speed watch equipment and local police reports to build a robust evidence base. Formal authority from the Parish Council will be provided in writing to the Working Party to liaise with CCllr CM, clarifying roles and expediting responses.

230/25 **Traffic Working Party**

10.1 The agenda incorrectly referred to the Traffic Working Party. The correct title is the Highways Working Party. This item was discussed under section 9.2.

231/25 **Finance and Establishment**

11.1 The Council considered the Finance Committee's recommendations to amend the Standing Orders. The proposed amendments included: updating job titles, formalising edits approved in May, which had not been previously published; Updating the names of banks in the Financial Regulations to align with the Council's Investment Strategy, which is also due for approval. The Chair invited comments or suggested changes from Members.

A provisional change to meeting starts at 7:00 pm was discussed, with final decisions deferred until the annual calendar approval in December 2025 for consistency across committees. A provisional change to meeting starts at 7:00 pm was discussed, with final decisions deferred until the annual calendar approval in December 2025 for consistency across committees.

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to adopt the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. Both documents will be re-approved in May to align with the start of the new Council year.

11.2 The Council considered the payments list for October, as prepared by the Responsible Financial Officer. It was noted that, going forward, the payments list will be produced directly from Scribe, in line with previous practice. Due to the timing of meetings falling close to the start of each month, it was agreed that payments and reconciliations will be reported one month in arrears to allow sufficient time for completion of the bank reconciliation.

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to approve payment list for October.

11.3 The Council considered Assertion 10, a new policy to strengthen cyber security. Key requirements for Cllrs include ensuring personal devices used for Council business have biometric or PIN protection and appropriate virus protection. Further recommendations will follow as part of the transition to Cloudy IT. It was unanimously agreed to approve Assertion 10 and Cllrs were reminded to comply with the policy immediately.

11.4 The Council authorised the creation of multiple savings accounts, each capped at £85,000 to comply with FSCS compensation limits, diversifying funds previously held in a low-interest Co-op account. Accounts will be staggered with terms of 12 and 24 months to optimise yields. All accounts will require two signatories for transactions, with the full Finance Committee designated as authorised signatories to prevent bottlenecks.

The Council delegated authority to the Proper Officer to open and manage these accounts from December 2025, with flexibility to continue management if interest rate drops do not exceed 0.25%.
It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to approve the Finance and Operations Officer to begin setting up bank accounts in line with the Committee's recommendations.

11.5 ***It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED for the Chair and Vice Chair to sign Cricket Club lease. All documents were signed.***

11.6 The Executive Officer has been following up with the HDC on Section 106 funding but has been unable to obtain a clear timeline. Recommendation: If the Section 106 funding is confirmed at £60,000 or above before the next Council meeting, the Executive Officer is delegated to instruct the contractor for Charrington Way. If the funding is significantly below £60,000, the matter will be referred to by the Council at the December meeting for a decision.
It was UNANIMOUSLY **AGREED to delegate authority to the Executive Officer to instruct the contractor for Charrington Way if the Section 106 funding is approved at £60,000 or above.**

11.7 This matter was discussed under Agenda Item 11.4

232/25 **Wickhurst Green Transfers**

12.1 Progress continues land transfers from the Wickhurst Green development, with legal processes advancing but some procedural decisions pending. Land Transfer and S106: It is anticipated that SL6 (basin), SL7, and SL8 may now transfer in early 2026, and updated S106 indexing will be presented to the Council for approval at the December meeting.

12.2 All searches have been ordered, with an expected turnaround of approximately 8 weeks. Originally, utilities searches were not recommended; however, HLS advised that the Council had requested these previously. Line searches indicate no significant utilities on the parcels. On HLS advice, the Executive Officer has requested any legacy searches held by Vistry, and as-built utilities plans have been requested by Andrew Fisher and Chris Smith. The Council was asked to consider whether utilities searches are required. It was agreed that this matter be added to the December agenda for further discussion.

233/25 **Quotes from Safeplay**

13.1 The council addressed safety and maintenance priorities for Broadbridge Heath playgrounds, agreeing to targeted repairs within budget and safety guidelines. The August 2025 Safety Playground report identified a series of issues, with a medium-risk amber category requiring attention.
The total cost for all amber repairs, including supply and installation, is approximately £2,538.80 excluding VAT, well within the annual £10,000 repair budget. A proposal will be

brought to the next Recreation Committee meeting to review inspection reports and plan future maintenance strategies.

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to exclude repairs to medium-risk equipment at Charrington Way, instead opting to close those items out of use due to impending site redevelopment. Medium-risk equipment elsewhere will be repaired as recommended per Safeplay August Annual Remedial Quote.

234/25 **Planning Applications**

14.1

Application	Address	Details
DC/25/1583	90 Carter Drive Broadbridge Heath West Sussex RH12 3GZ	Conversion of loft into habitable living space with pitched roof dormer on rear roof slope, and installation of 4no. rooflights to the front elevation and 2no. rooflights to the rear elevation.
Decision:		The Parish Council noted that the proposed changes would make the front elevation appear visually busy due to the addition of four rooflights, and the rear elevation similarly so with a pitched roof dormer and two rooflights. It was observed that there is some potential for overlooking of adjacent properties; however, The Parish has no objection or further comments about this planning application.

235/25 **Donation of Fruit Trees**

15.1 It was noted that Biffa had previously delivered 10 fruit trees to the Parish Council as a donation. The Council agreed to accept the donation. A plan was proposed to distribute the trees as follows: Approximately five trees to be planted at the Western Avenue Allotments to create an edible border. Up to five trees to be offered to Shelley Primary School. The Executive Officer will contact Shelley Primary School via email to offer a donation of up to five trees.

236/25 **Christmas Council Dinner**

16.1 It was noted that the Christmas Council Dinner had been postponed to January, as some members were unable to attend on the original date.

James Brookes left at 21:00

237/25 **Personnel Committee**

17.1 The Council noted that the Locum Administrator is currently working two days a week. The Executive Officer reported that she has assigned administrator tasks and that the Council is in the process of reviewing policies.

Cllr JC is currently acting as Chair of the Personnel Committee until the end of December. Cllr JC is to organise a catch-up meeting with the Executive Officer to review her progress in the role.

Cllr SH highlighted that currently only the Executive Officer holds membership in the SLCC and suggested that it would be beneficial for the RFO to have her own membership. Locum Clerk Louise Shaw stated that if the RFO wishes to study towards FILCA, she would require her own SLCC membership. The Council agreed that the RFO should hold her own SLCC membership.

238/25 **Officer Updates and Correspondence**

18.1 The Executive Officer thanked Council Members for the support received since starting in post and provided a brief update on current activities. The Executive Officer confirmed that she will circulate updates regularly to keep Cllrs informed rather than waiting until meetings, but requested her update remain on the agenda to share any time-sensitive information.

The new IT system is scheduled to go live on 8th December, an earlier date than originally planned. This is expected to improve office efficiency, particularly as the current email system has experienced frequent crashes.

A brief meeting was held with Cllrs EMM and SH to review the Parish Council website. Several recommendations were made, including adding missing links for residents to report safeguarding concerns and fly tipping. Improving interactivity and user-friendliness so residents can access information directly without contacting the Parish Council office. Colour scheme preferences for the website are under review, aiming to subtly integrate council branding colours.

Cllr SH reported on the Operation Watershed application. He noted that the application, submitted by the EO a couple of weeks ago, has not yet received a response, despite a promised review within a week.
CCllr CM has recommended writing to the Cabinet Member responsible for the Environment to help progress the application. Cllr SH suggested that the Council consider doing the same. It was agreed that the Executive Officer and Cllr SH will draft a letter for submission to the Cabinet Member to help move the application forward.

Cllr SH reported that aerial photographs of the village had been successfully completed. The photographer requested a Google review for his business; the Council agreed not to provide a review.

Cllr SH noted that Tarbert Trees had been instructed to carry out a significant amount of tree work. Concerns were raised that the work may not have been completed and no completion date has been provided. The Executive Officer was instructed to contact Tarbert Trees for an update on the current progress, particularly with winter approaching.

The Chair requested that a photograph of the Broadbridge Heath War Memorial be placed on the Parish Council website in time for Remembrance Sunday. The Executive Officer will action this request.

239/25 **Dates of Next Meetings**

Budget setting meeting- Monday 24th November 2025 – 13:00-14:30
Recreation and Environment – Monday 24th November– 19:00pm
Full Council – Monday 1st December – 19.30pm
Personnel Committee – Jan 2026 – 19.30pm
To note Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council may be required.

With no further business to discuss, the Chair called the meeting to a close at 21:14pm

Signed.. Dated..