

**SHADOW COUNCIL FOR HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SHADOW HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ALBERY HOUSE, HORSHAM
ON MONDAY 26TH JANUARY 2026 COMMENCING AT 6pm**

Present Members: District Councillors: M. Boffey, N. Emery, R. Fletcher, C. Franke, J. Mercer, J. Olson (Chair), S. Raby and D. Skipp

Cllr. J. Pounds (substitute) – Vice-chair of Denne Neighbourhood Council, J. Steele – Chair of Horsham Blueprint Neighbourhood Forum, Cllr. D. Sumpter (Vice-chair)– Chair of Forest Neighbourhood Council and Cllr. M. Warrack – Chair of Trafalgar Neighbourhood Council.

In attendance: Gill Gray (Interim Clerk) and Aisha Nottage (Democratic Services and Elections Manager)

SC/01/01/26	<p>Elect a Chair</p> <p>It was moved by Cllr. M. Boffey and seconded by Cllr. R. Fletcher and RESOLVED: that Cllr. J. Olson was duly elected as Chair of the Shadow Council.</p>	
SC/02/01/26	<p>Elect a Vice-chair</p> <p>It was moved by Cllr. J. Olson and seconded by Cllr. M. Warrack and RESOLVED: that Cllr. D. Sumpter was duly elected as Vice-chair of the Shadow Council.</p>	
SC/03/01/26	<p>Apologies for absence and notification of substitute Members</p> <p>The Shadow Council received and accepted apologies from Cllrs. A. Frankland – personal commitment, C. Minto – work commitment, T. Mitchell – personal commitment and C. Trott – work commitment. No apologies were received from Cllr. C. Sweeney.</p> <p>J. Pounds was a substitute for T. Mitchell.</p>	
SC/04/01/26	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Cllr R. Fletcher confirmed memberships of various organisations; none of these were relevant to any item on the Agenda. The Interim Clerk clarified the definitions for both Pecuniary Interests and Non-Pecuniary Interests.</p> <p>There were no declarations of Interests.</p>	
SC/05/01/26	<p>Terms of Reference for Shadow Council</p> <p>Members considered the draft Terms of Reference for the Shadow Council as prepared by the Interim Clerk.</p> <p>It was moved by J Steele and seconded by Cllr. D Skipp and RESOLVED: that the draft Terms of Reference be adopted for the Shadow Council.</p>	
SC/06/01/26	<p>Draft Budget for 2026/2027</p> <p>Members considered the recommended draft budget for the new Parish Council for 2026/2027, prepared by the Interim Clerk based on a Precept figure of £188,575.00 and estimated expenditure. During the debate, the</p>	

	<p>following comments were captured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing contractors will be reviewed alongside quotes from two additional suppliers with a report to be presented at the next meeting. Members discussed venue options, including interim use of space within Albery House. The Interim Clerk will explore all options and report back to the next Shadow Council meeting. Concerns were raised regarding continued access for existing hirers of Blackbridge Community Centre. The Interim Clerk will clarify arrangements with the Property Team. The proposed staffing structure is to be reviewed again, including the option to outsource the finance function. It was noted that the Special Charge will remain in place for residents in 2026/2027 but will not form part of the Parish Council's income. There was no provision in the draft budget for publicity and engagement with the community. <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim Clerk will review existing estimates alongside two further quotations and prepare a report. Interim Clerk will continue to explore venue options and report back to the next meeting. Interim Clerk will clarify access for existing hirers of Blackbridge CC with the Property Team. Interim Clerk will explore cost of outsourcing the finance function for the Parish Council. Interim Clerk will include estimated expenditure for community engagement and publicity, including a parish magazine or newsletter. <p>Members noted the reports.</p>	
<p>SC/07/01/26</p>	<p>Draft Governance Documents</p> <p>Members considered the first draft of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct. During the debate, the following comments were captured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The templates used are sector standard and using a legally sound foundation; the Interim Clerk suggested that any alterations and/or additions would be ideally undertaken by the new Parish Council when it has formed and has agreed/established the direction it specifically intends to follow. Communication approach by the Shadow Council to be agreed between the Chair and Interim Clerk; particularly for Members engaging with the public. An email to be shared with all Members. A draft Publication Scheme will be shared with Members of the Shadow Council at a future meeting. There is the option to alter Standing Order 3i and remove the insistence that individuals need to stand when addressing the Parish Council. The approved minutes from the Shadow Council meetings will be publicly available on the Horsham District Council website. The minutes for the new Parish Council will be publicly available 	

	<p>on the Parish Council new website.</p> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Clerk and Chair to discuss the communication approach, particularly for Members engaging with the public; an email to be sent to all Members. • Interim Clerk to draft a Publication Scheme and present at a future meeting. • Interim Clerk to incorporate comments received from Members and bring them back to the next meeting. <p>Members noted the documents.</p>	
SC/08/01/26	<p>Attendance to Horsham Association of Local Councils Area Committee</p> <p>It was noted that the proposed date for the HALC Area Committee meeting had been altered from 12th of February to the 25th of February 2026.</p> <p>Action</p> <p>Interim Clerk to contact the Secretary at Horsham District Association of Local Councils to confirm attendance and to seek the Agenda and meeting link to join.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED: that the Chair, Cllr. J Olson or the Vice-chair Cllr. D. Sumpter will attend the HALC Area Committee meeting on Wednesday 25th February 2026 at 7pm with the Interim Clerk.</p>	
SC/09/01/26	<p>Horsham District Council Website – Interim Arrangements</p> <p>Members debated the interim arrangements for the new Parish Council on the HDC website; the following comments were captured during the debate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Interim Clerk will seek a dedicated email address for the Shadow Council to be added to the website. • The dates for the future meetings of the Shadow Council and how the public can access in person or watch remotely will be uploaded to the HDC website. • Resources from NALC will be passed by the Interim Clerk to the Comms Team to be uploaded to the website to encourage interest in the upcoming elections for the new Parish Council. <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Clerk to request a dedicated email address from the IT Team to be added to the website page. • Interim Clerk to request that future meeting dates, how to attend the meetings and access remotely are added to the website by the Comms Team. • Interim Clerk to pass NALC resources to the Comms Team to request they are uploaded for the forthcoming elections. <p>Members noted the information.</p>	
SC/10/01/26	<p>Dates for Shadow Council Meetings</p> <p>The future meeting dates for the Shadow Council are Tuesday 24th February 2026 at 6pm and Monday 23rd March 2026 at 6pm; both meetings to take place in the Council Chamber, Albery House, Horsham.</p> <p>Members noted the information.</p>	

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The Chair closed the meeting at 6.46pm.

Signed ... 

Date *24 Feb 2026*